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THE GREAT LONGING

THE GREAT LONGING

A Book for Vain People.

BY
ALAN D. MICKLE.



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THE WALTER SCOTT PUBLISHING CO., LTD.
LONDON (PATERNOSTER SQUARE, E.C.) AND FELLING-ON-TYNE.

MELBOURNE:
THOMAS C. LOTHIAN.
1910.

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**“What Fatherland! Our helm guides us thitherwards,
where our children’s land is! Thitherwards, more violently
than the sea, surges our great longing.”—NIETZCHE.**

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THE GREAT LONGING.

CHAPTER I.

THE ART OF LIFE.

I.

WE men are like the coral insects whose world is based upon the sea's floor. Above them is the grey glow of the far-off sun's light, and below a great darkness: and ever they build upwards towards the light and away from the darkness. And so we build our world of life: behind is a darkness, and around us dense grey waters of mystery, and before a feeble glow that ever becomes more brilliant as the ages wear on. For ever we advance on the life's work of our fathers, as the coral insects rise on the work performed by their kind who have passed away. And as the first insects worked for the last, so we work for Posterity, and our instinctive cry is not for the fatherland, but for the children's land that is to be.

II.

If the coral insect has intelligence, then intelligently it answers the great sensual desires. The glow of the sunlight has entered its being and become these

desires. It sets up an ideal wrought to the shape of all the beautiful, all the desired things, with which the senses bring it into conscious contact. And its life aim is to conform as greatly as possible to this ideal. And all the beautiful things that aid in the building up of this ideal are as the colours that make up light. For the ideal itself, bounded by the limited range of the senses, is but as a ray of the myriad-rayed glow that is the sun's impression upon the surface of the sea. And this ray becomes for the insect's limited intelligence the one end of life. And confident in its ability to achieve in a great way that end, it works for the little day that its life endures. It has no conscious concern with the end of its coral world, the striving for the light that is above the water. It answers the desire within its being for pleasure and secretes its life amount of coral substance and moulds it to the shape its pleasure decides, the shape of the impression of the ray of sunlight that is its life ideal. But whether or not the insect has intelligence as we know it, we know not; but that it has instinct we do know, and it is from instinct that intelligence in time emerges, as the instinct from the over-soul of all. And this instinct is wise. Its horizon of understanding is infinitely wider than the corresponding horizon of the intelligence. For if in the insect, the intelligence seeks the ray of the sun's impression, the instinct seeks the sunlight itself, the instinctive ideal of all lives. It has little concern with the manner of the insect's working, but every concern with the end of all its work. Consciously, each insect, backed by a small intelligence, battles and struggles on for the ideal of its day. Subcon-

sciously it inexorably advances its coral world on its journey towards the sun. Its instinct has marvellous understanding. It intelligently rises on those it overpowers. Its instinct practises a wonderful humility and helps others to rise, knowing that their rise is for its own benefit, the advancing of its own ideal, its own greatest pleasure, concealed from intelligence, behind all little and near pleasures. Its instinct sees one end in all the million ends, and strives to assist in the gaining of that one end in all. So whilst the intelligence struggles in its little light for its little coral structure distinguishable in that light, the instinct in a far broader light works patiently, with a great humility, for all that it gains it gives to those who come after it, but nevertheless inexorably for the forwarding of the whole coral world on its journey to the far-off light of the sun.

III.

And like the coral insects, man works consciously for his ideal and unconsciously for the ideal of all men. Every man is an artist, and every man in the work he does paints his conscious ideal, and in the harmony-form about the work paints Truth, which is the glow before him, to which he ever advances with all his kind. Instinct is desire, feeling, heart-wisdom. Intelligence is brain-wisdom, and instinct is behind all intelligence; for all knowledge is but expressed desire, and every act performed and every written thought, is but a shaped, perhaps long ago experienced, sensation. And behind instinct is the soul, the Will to Express, God; and as gas differs

from liquid, and liquid from solid, only according to motion, so intelligence and instinct and the soul differ in the form they take also according to motion, which is the only indefinable thing. Instinct ever tends as it were to solidify into intelligence, and the soul ever to liquefy as it were into instinct, and thus in the end solidify as universal intelligence and understanding between all things. So there is an intelligent art and an instinctive art, but art in all its forms is the depiction of the desires, and its ultimate end a depiction of God. For the desires of man are but the wishes of God, and the heart-wisdom of man is as the brain-wisdom of God. Every thought we have we substantiate in the art of the intellect, every feeling behind that thought in the art of the instinct, and our end is to substantiate the one thought of which each is but a minute part.

IV.

As we are willed so we desire, and for what we desire we live. Desire is pain, and we seek the pleasure that is the overcoming of pain. As we are impressed, so we must impress other things. As we desire, so we must make others desire. We must shape our desires and reproduce our desires in others by holding before them the shape of our desires. As the glow of light wakens desire in the coral insect, so Truth wakens desire in us; and as the insect seeks to gain the sunlight so we seek to gain Truth. We would all be as that which wills us. We would each one of us be as God in ourselves and the works we do. And all beautiful things we behold shape our

desires, for beautiful things for each of us are desired things. And we would reproduce the beautiful things and thus shape our desires. If we cannot reproduce a beautiful woman in her child, we will paint her or picture her in our songs or verse. In all the work we do, if we love her greatly, we will describe poorly or richly the impression she has made upon us. She will live again in the harmony form, the music about our work. And we paint flowers and sing of them and wear them on our breasts. We reproduce if we can great deeds. We are imitators of the beautiful, for we would be before all men the most beautiful, the most desired of all things. For in our intelligence we see only our own life's end, and until intelligence becomes as wise as instinct, we will strive and fight on, and overpower to the greatest of our ability our own kind, to make them conform to our ideal. Our instinct calls us towards the light and we would be desired of all men, so that all men would follow us. But when heart-wisdom becomes brain-wisdom we will know, that though all men set out in different directions, the course of all is as from pole to pole of a globe, and the end of each is the end of all.

V.

Truth is that which lies beyond all that is known; it is that which we would all know. Could the sun think, it might believe the earth beautiful and not realize that it is its own light that makes it so beautiful. And our desires radiate from us as the light from the sun, and all beautiful things, but shape

our desires as the earth shapes the light of the sun. And that which reveals and makes us aware of ourselves and our own powers, is for us the beautiful thing. And when we behold a beautiful thing, we know we behold a truthful thing, that which truly writes our experience, that which truly expresses our desires. All that we feel is true, and if we can describe what we feel, we describe Truth. And if we lie, so that we better describe our feelings by answering our desires, then still do we tell the truth. We are all truth-seekers, and truth is the motive of life. We would all express ourselves and by so doing express Truth. We build, build; eternally we work at the one colossal structure, the unknown that we feel and that must be expressed. And when we cease to live, all the work we have done remains for ever a translation of ourselves, and the influence of our living—and who is there to set a limit to that influence?—is the everlasting monument over our lives. And when the supernatural is all revealed, when all desires are quiet, and the one structure whereof all individual life works are as minute but essential cells, is complete and perfect, then shall mankind cease to be, and God shall stand revealed as the result of all life force that has surged through all time. Truth is the monument that is ever being erected over all forms of life; and motivated by Truth, we seek the beautiful things that shape our desires and are terms wherein Truth can by us, imitative artists all, be expressed. And we would by our imitating become as all beautiful things we know or have known, and, as our ideal selves, stand as the most perfect interpretation of Truth.

VI.

There is an instinctive ideal and a conscious ideal, and the instinctive ideal is beyond the conscious ideal. For the lower forms of life there is no conscious ideal, and the higher the conscious ideal, the higher is the form of life. Man differs only from the worm and the flower in his power of imagination, and imagination is illuminated memory. He can throw a light as it were into the depths of himself and image what he has seen. And what one sees clearly, one can always describe by comparison, clearly also. Every living thing is impressed, willed to live, and life is an experience of a myriad sensations. And not one of these sensations is ever forgotten whilst there is still life. From birth to the present moment, we have been collecting impressions, have been charged with messages and duties, and all these messages and duties we remember, and our pleasure of life comes when we deliver or perform some of them. We do not really forget. The tiniest flower that ever attracted our attention in the garden, and the star that made us pause once in our far-off childhood to look aloft at as it shone in the night skies, have impressed us, willed as to express the impressions that they have imprinted somewhere within us. All our desires are but, long ago perhaps, experienced sensations, and if we did not desire we could not live. Life without memory is inconceivable. We hear of cases of loss of memory, but people may lose the power of imagining, the power to express in their minds the past, but, whilst there still remains sensation, there must still remain

memory. A man coming to one without memory, would be a new shape—and yet not a shape, for there would be no other shapes for comparison, and nothing would be but what the senses directly perceived. He would have no associations, would not be terrible or pleasing; if he went away and returned again, he would be the same, a sensation, forgotten as soon as experienced. And all desires are unexpressed, but never forgotten sensations, and without memory would be no desires. And what does not desire does not exist. And worms and flowers, and birds, and fish exist and they must remember. If all I desired most on earth were promised me on condition that I sang a certain song, very probably I could not do so; but if some one else sang the song, I might recognize it at once. I could not imagine the song, and therefore could not reproduce it in art form; but I have not forgotten it, and never will, even though so deeply buried is it that it is beyond the conscious recognition of my memory. And all things that come into contact with my ever-groping senses—and with my senses I reach the stars; and with them mechanically strengthened, I see into the formerly unseen and become almost as vast as the world is—do I grasp and claim for my memory. I live because of what I have experienced in the Past. I live but to tell to all men and all things all that I remember; and all that I feel I would translate into action, language, fine art, that all others would read and study and know my past. If I have pleasure, it is because I have found something for which I set out to seek in my past, something I was willed to seek. If I suffer pain, it is because something, some new

impression comes between me and the object of my quest. If I fear, it is a recalling of pains I have known. If I hope, it is because of my triumphs in the Past. And the animals that are on a lowlier plane of life than we are, remember as we remember, but they do not dream as we dream; they have not the mind-picturing power that we have; they cannot picture a man's face or a long ago incident as clearly as we can, so that the smallest suggestion of the face or the incident will throw a flood of light back into the misted over Past and bring the hour and the place once again, in terms that the mind understands.

VII.

The most highly evolved organism is always the most complex, the most delicate, the most sensitive to impressions. And the most highly evolved man is the most sensitive of all things. He feels more pain and more pleasure than any other living thing. His feelings, his desires are more clearly defined and shaped than those of any other living thing. And higher animals such as dogs and horses are more sensitive than lower forms of life, and have gradually evolving minds. They can fashion on those minds pictures of faces and forms and sounds, and recognize the originals of their pictures; but even with them can be little more than vague fear and hope shapes, and they do not, as man to a certain extent does, know what they hope and fear for. They remember as man remembers, but they do not know what they remember. And the most highly evolved man is he who can picture most clearly in his

imagination what he remembers. Given time and tools and material, and he will shape the forms of his imagination, the impressive things that he remembers and pictures in his imagination, and becomes the greatest of his kind. And some men are abnormally sensitive to motion and form, some to light and shade, and some to sound; and the former will probably be men of action, and the second painters and pictorial artists, and the last poets, musicians, and thinkers. All that we have ever experienced we remember, and all that we remember has expressed in part the desire, the great longing within us, and we would reproduce in art form that great longing, by reproducing all that we remember.

VIII.

If we hear one continuous sound for a great length of time our ears become so accustomed to it, that it is really heard no more, and much inferior sounds of short duration can be easily distinguished. In the same way, if there was but one colour, there would be no colour. And if I live all my days in a certain city, I know not whether it be great or small or beautiful until I have travelled and visited other cities of the world. From beginning to end life is a quest for things wherewith we might compare and come to know what has been before us all our days. If we could not find darkness, we would know no light, and to know ourselves we must know men who are not as we are. We do not seek what we have, but what we have not, and those whom we love must always possess our ideal qualities, which are qualities that we have not. Unexpressed impressions are longings and

emotions, and we seek often the antithesis of that which has impressed us in the Past, that we might by contrast and comparison describe the impressive thing. And the glow-like joy-flush that comes over us before a beautiful thing is as the shout of triumph of our hearts, which recognize the long sought, the form that will aid in the expression of the long pent-up, ever restless, and all disturbing desire that is within us.

IX.

Life is art: and all that which is behind the present moment, all that has ever impressed us, although at the time we were unaware that we were impressed, is stored within our memories, and now are the myriad surging desires within us that will us on to live and to express ourselves. And at the root of all forms of expression are two conflicting forces, and all Nature is the written history of myriads of such conflicts, and we are only words in the history that is written by the Power that wills us to live. Motion to be expressed requires a force to move and a force to resist the motion, and all life forms are expressions of motion; and all life is an endless conflict between the internal and the external. A man in a balloon is driven through the air at a great rate of speed and only knows he moves when he regards the earth beneath him. And we, dwellers on the earth, move through space at an incredible speed, and only are we aware of our motion by the stars in the skies above us. The wind that howls round the chimney tops of our dwellings, that smites us with icy, burning fingers if we move abroad, carries along with it the man in the

balloon, and he is unaware of the force that is by him. Force can only be experienced by resistance, by the opposition of contrary forces, and the greatest demonstration of energy is the conflicting of the two greatest opposing forces; and the grandest form of expression is the demonstration of the conflicting of extremes.

X.

The surface of the earth is neither flat nor mountainous, but it is between these two; and it is so in obedience to laws. Gravity would have the surface level and uniform; other forces such as volcanic action would have it otherwise. The tallest mountains symbolize the greatest resistance to one law, and the greatest extent of plain resists most thoroughly the other. These extremes represent the conflict between giant powers. The uneven surface of the earth writes the story of the conflict between centrifugal and centripetal forces. And we men represent, as the earth and the stars and all natural things, a conflict between forces. We would always move to express the feelings within us, and all movement is destructive. To obey one law is to break the other, and yet to express ourselves we must destroy the balance that tells no tale. Monotony, the chaining down of all desires,—is that not really the greatest pain we know? Within each of us surges and rages the conflict that must be expressed. We would have all men equal, know that in the end they must be equal, but, at the same time, we would have all men serve us. There is in each of us the brain ideal and the heart ideal, and reason wars incessantly

with instinct. And some men follow reason, and take the socialistic ideal goodness and would forcibly level all men; and others the evil-doers to the first men, follow their instincts and become the individualists, the would-be mountain-like men. The good break the laws that govern the evil, and the evil, the laws that control the good. The conflict is incessant and its history is recorded in civilization and the expansion of the imagination. And a reading of the history shows that the result is a beautifying of man, and the drawing nearer of the ideal man, the god.

XI.

The abnormal, the highest mountain, the vastest desert, the mightiest storm, the deepest silence, is always the most attractive and impressive, and appeals most to man. It expresses what he desires to express—his deepest feelings, his greatest longing—it signifies successful revolt; and successful revolt is the ideal of his deepest desires. He would cast off that which ever binds him to earth and his own insignificance; he would throw aside the grey cloak of mystery that hides from him the last Truth. He would be as all that is vastest and greatest and most successful in law breaking. He would out-do all that has been done by the greatest of men; out-march the leaders, defeat the victors, do what no man has yet done, go where no man has yet gone.

XII.

Life is art, and art is imitation of Nature, and all men and all living things are artists, and all would be

as Nature. Nature wraps round and is the external form of the Supernatural, and the Supernatural is God. • God is expressed in Nature, and we would each one of us imitate and be as God. And so to fulfil this desire that includes all desires, as best we may, we gather and store in our imagination contrasts and extremes, similes and metaphors, light and darkness, sound and silence, action and inaction; and our greatest contrasting extremes are as the stars we mark our flight through space by. To imitate the most impressive things is, we know, to express our deepest feelings, and to win our highest pleasure. And the most impressive things are for us those which light the greatest depths of ourselves, the most beautiful things, and the subjects of the art that our life is.

CHAPTER II.

THE WILL TO EXPRESS.

I.

LIFE on Earth—and that is all growth and motion that resists and overcomes the force of gravity—is a manifestation of the power of the sun. But beyond the sun, beyond the reach even of the mechanically so vastly strengthened senses of man, is the unknown, and, therefore, still undefined power that motives the sun. And man reveres and fears and worships only the unknown. Whilst the sun was to man the self-motived greatest light giver, and, therefore, the giver of the power that to the greatest extent makes life manifest, it was to man the supreme god. It was the giant-attributed source of all will. To it he traced the cause of all things, and all life was only a result of its still burning and ever-shaping desires. It brought as it desired the drought, and parched the land, or gave warmth and comfort to man, and ripened about him budding forms of life. His very existence depended upon it, and the source of its existence he believed, for fear forbade him to think otherwise, was within itself. Then it was the mystery-shrouded, fear-haloed unknown, and man bowed reverently and with great awe, and prayed before its rising and setting. But thought that had made the sun a god

in the end stole away its divinity. That which, urged on always by the fear-overcoming suffering of ever-increasing desires, had traced the cause of life to the sun, traced the cause of the sun itself to a power beyond the sun. Then the sun's mysterious future-shaping qualities fled as the shadows fly before light. It became then only an expression of the desire that motivated its power. To man, the one-time god became a word, a message, a teller of another and greater God. For if all the results of motion on the earth are expressions of the heat-conveyed desire of the sun, the sun itself must express in itself and in all the results it achieves, the power and the desire that is the motive of the sun. And so God becomes translated into the results of life on earth, and all desire to live is but will to live, and all the result of living is but an art that shapes the desires of God, and in the end will define God and become God. And however much conventional modesty there may be about man's conscious life aim, in his instinctive ambition there is, and can be, no such modesty. For he would, when he begins to seek in the sun the secret of its power, know that which is beyond the sun, and become in the end, which is the last child of man's end, as powerful as that which the sun expresses. To the instinctive ambition there is but one end: each man living on earth would be as wise and beautiful and all powerful as God.

II.

To know oneself is to answer the desires within oneself—to express oneself. And one expresses oneself with but one object, and that is to be under-

stood. And the desires within us,—are we not willed by that which causes life towards what we desire? Our desires are the sun's desires, and the desires of our God. And when we act, speak, think, even, we express these desires and achieve in part the purpose of God. By making ourselves understood we are defining God. And a perfect definition of God, would not that be God Himself? The sun shines that we shall live and know why the sun shines, and ultimately take to ourselves the power of the sun, on the way to our own God-becoming. And all lesser life forms than we are, we would instinctively have become as we are: we would express ourselves as the sun expresses itself, and be understood by all these lesser things.

III.

We are all artists. The instinctive artistic sense is in all men and all living things. If we idly scratch the earth with a stick we find ourselves unconsciously seeking some design. When we speak we seek to make our speech as musical as we can. The clerk adding up columns of figures will strive to conform to an ideal neatness. A harmony form we would have glow as it were about all the work we do. We would all be beautiful, for what is beautiful shapes the desires of all men, and is instinctively understood by all men. And by all men we would be understood.

IV.

And we all seek pleasure. Be we Buddhists Christians, Dionysians, Freethinkers, Altruists, Jews, Hedonists, our own pleasure is our one end in life,

"Our only happiness is pleasure," says Montaigne in one of his essays. Bacchus, Buddha, the Christian God are only masks worn by pleasure. We are all valuers and buyers and sellers of pleasure and all would be good bargain-makers. Do we sacrifice all present-day pleasure—it is because we hope and believe that we will gain greater pleasure from the Future, than that which we sacrifice. Virtue will be rewarded, the Christian believes, and against his natural desires becomes virtuous on this condition. Men die for their beliefs because they believe that the reward they will gain for the dying will more than compensate for all the pain of the dying. To please one's God is to gain a promise of future pleasure.

v.

And this pleasure that we all seek and all serve,—what is it but the overcoming of pain? One must suffer to know pleasure. Pains and emotions are only unexpressed desires, and when we express a desire the pain of it will cease to be. All impressions are conscious or subconscious sensations, and all sensations are pains. That which impresses us creates in us desire, and desire is pain. The Great Longing includes all desires and is one long, dull, endless pain. It is formed by all things that impress us and transmit by so doing the desire of God from all the impressing things to ourselves. And we would impress others as we are impressed, and the impression we make on others will be the expression of ourselves; and the better we express ourselves the more pleasure will there come to us.

VI.

To live ; to power ; to express ! The instinct to express is the profoundest of all instincts ; for we live but to power others, but we power others but to express ourselves. And we express ourselves that others will understand us and become so much more powerful by that understanding than we are. And even when we lie and deceive, and power others by so doing, our only end, though we know it not, is to express our desires as best we may, and serve mankind and achieve the purpose for which men and all living things are. The Will to Express is the will of all wills and the soul of all souls, and as we express ourselves, over others we become the Will to Express ; and thus ever we mount, and begin the better to know ourselves and God and God's purpose that we express. And we all serve ; and do we serve that our joy shall be more as the master serves his ideal, or as the slave serves his master that his pain shall be less, we serve but the Will to Express, and our one sought wage is pleasure. And the only way to pleasure is to express the desires within us and create of ourselves greater and wiser selves. And a man's child is but an expression of his desires as a work of art or a life work is. But the child is an expression of the sensual desires of the father, and the work of art is an expression of the mental desires of the artist. And in this age, when man becomes more as the god, is not the purely mental pleasure superseding the purely sensual pleasure as the motive of life ? For the greatest man, whatever his calling, is the greatest artist, and do we not see in him the

most pleasure-possessing of all men, for would we not all be as he is?

VII.

Life is art, and whatever the conscious motive of it may be—and nearly always it is to power and achieve selfish ends—the instinctive motive is always based upon a profound humility. As life artists, we freely give to the world all our bodily and intellectual strength. Seeking what we desire, we become powerful and wise that others will reap the benefit of our strength and our wisdom. If we are strong mentally or physically, and within us burns the life enthusiasm, then we are willed by our desires to seek the strong mentally or physically to match ourselves against. By overcoming them we will most greatly express ourselves. We must defeat the winners in our own class, and the real gainers by victory are neither we nor our adversaries, but the onlookers and the followers, who, when we, strength exhausted by the conflict, become nothing, follow on our footsteps to take the fruit of our victory. The explorer penetrates farther into the wilderness than man has ever been before; he overcomes former record-breakers, past explorers; he expresses himself grandly and knows all the pleasure, the suffering-overcoming pleasure, of high self-expression. But the cities that spring up and the wealth and comfort that is won from the land he has discovered,—what will that profit the explorer when he has ceased to be? He has given all his strength to the service of mankind, and the granted or hoped for applause of mankind is all the reward he desires for that gift. For in that

applause he instinctively knows is instinctive understanding. He has expressed himself, and the life-art expression of himself has been understood by all men who applaud him. And a man who writes a great book gives all his intellectual might to the world of men and seeks to be understood and to make the world of men his equals and superiors, by their understanding of him. Like the explorer, he only opens up a track that future men will utilize to become greater than he is. Expression is thus a recognition, not of self-strength, but of self-limitation. Its greatest form is the giving of all to the Future, recognizing that the Future will do with the aid of the strength of the giver what the giver instinctively knows he cannot do. Living, powering, expressing—which is living and powering, all is ultimate giving, and we only give with pleasure to those who are stronger and more perfect men than ourselves. We give our best, all of us, as Master Valiant gave his sword, to him who is best fitted to use it. And all the satisfaction and all the pleasure that we know is the acknowledgment that comes to us, as instinctive hope or present-day applause, for the gift we bestow.

VIII.

When in action or language we describe truly an experience, and the world applauds our description, then the world beholds a well-drawn picture of its own unformed deepest feelings, understands us, and we are hailed as that which will enable the world to shape its desires, express itself, and overcome a long-borne pain. The explorer shapes his inmost being

in the work he does, and each man who applauds recognizes himself mirrored in the work. And the great writer but pictures truly his feelings in his book, and he who understands the book, so much the better understands himself. To the applauding world the applauded one is for the time the beautiful thing, the holder of desired things, and, therefore, the leader of the world. And the flower in the garden would be the fairest of its kind ; and deep in all men is the all-including desire, the great longing to be the most beautiful of all men, and to lead all the world. Unconsciously the rose in the garden seeks my appreciation, my instinctive understanding of its life-expression ; it would show that its desires are my desires, its God my God. And do I not understand and answer the unthought desire of the rose when I pluck it and wear it as an adornment of myself ? To be the most beautiful rose in the garden is its end, and it serves and gives all, even life, for that end. And the great vain man, the would-be most beautiful of all men, who acts as the sun shines, is he not as the rose, if not of the present age, then of the age that will be ?

CHAPTER III.

THE VANITY CONSCIENCE.

I.

IF we were without eyes we could not see the stars, but we could feel the warmth of the sun, and in time might deduce that there were stars. And in the same way we become aware of unseen forces that influence our ways and affect us as we are affected by the heat of the sun. We have noticed now the phenomenon Electricity, and have examined it, mechanically strengthening our examining senses to do so; and we have drawn it forth from the darkness that once surrounded it; and we have controlled it, and are likely to know in time its now unseen source. And there are myriads of such forces that influence and affect us all the days and hours of our lives. We are delicate, sensitive instruments, but a thousand times more delicate and sensitive must we become. A flower in the garden attracts our attention and is noticed by us, but to one of the lower animals it is nothing, though the animal is perhaps influenced by the flower, even as we are. Worms and flowers do not know whence the heat that gives them life comes, but they are affected and influenced by that heat just as much as we are who know that it comes from the sun. And the sun is nothing to

them, and once it was our God ! If we had one more sense the conscious world we live in would appear to be infinitely enlarged, but all the time, senses or no senses, we live in the same world. There are unseen stars, unseen sources of influence, attractive and repulsive powers, that impress our subconscious selves, and our acts are set to the expression of these so often unconscious impressions. Everything affects and influences our way of life. If we suddenly alter our stride so as not to tread on a worm that lies on the path, all our life course has been altered definitely and for all time. And the mysterious waves of unseen motive that float through the air, when they come in contact with us, they must affect us and play their part in our lives. We are affected by things that we do not even feel, and feel things that we do not know, and we would feel all that affects us, and know all that we feel. We would express not only what our senses allow us consciously to perceive, but also all that which is beyond the range of our most sensitive senses ; and we ever strive to strengthen and enlarge the radius of action of those senses. We see now with the aid of instruments far beyond our natural sight. We count waves that with our senses we cannot feel. We have found colours that we cannot see with our eyes. Once the flower in the garden, if it was not food for us, was nothing to us, but now it attracts and appeals to us, and becomes often a desired and therefore beautiful thing. As we grow more sensitive, we know more pain ; but we also understand more and know a new pleasure that is born of that understanding. The flower is a history of its own life experience, and the experience

from the beginning of time of all its kind. It ever seeks to become more expressive and more attractive, more beautiful. And when its beauty attracts us and claims our attention, do we not listen to its story and understand and recognize in the telling of its experiences a telling also of many of our own? And the desire wakes in us to imitate it, as the desire is to imitate all things that attract us. It shapes one of our desires, pictures one of our myriad internal impressions, and we foster it and care for it and enable it to become more beautiful and more expressive because we, subconsciously perhaps, understand it. And ever as things grow beautiful, the more they are desired—for beautiful things are but desired things—and the greater influence they exert. And all things would be desired by all other things, for all things follow but desired things, and the deepest desire is to lead all things. And the flower would be the most perfect flower, and would conform to the ideals of all other things and paint it as it were in itself, its life art, a picture of what other things desire. And every man would he not become more sensitive and know more, even at the expense of great suffering and the facing of great perils, not so much of what he wants, but of what other men desire, so that he will become the desired thing and the leader and the most beautiful man of all his kind? Add to the power of his eyes, and the distant stars draw near to him and become blazing suns. Make him more susceptible to influences, and he will draw nearer to Truth, and will be able the better to depict Truth, which is what all men, above all other things, desire to do. For the way to Truth he knows is the way

to glory, and the way to glory is the way to the future god. His ultimate instinctive aim is the overman whom far off he sees. He would become more delicate, more fragile, more intricate, more marvellous, more pain-suffering. He would know all there is to know, and in his life he explains all that he knows. He would lead all the world. He would meet God face to face and be as God before men.

II.

Vanity is the desire of attracting attention to oneself with the instinctive idea that those who are attracted will instinctively study and understand. It begins amongst mankind with the fop who apes the ideals of others, and by doing so expresses his own desires in a language those others will understand. It ends with the greatest of all men, who would attract to themselves the ears and eyes of present-day men and all posterity. As the flower would be beautiful, so the vain man would be greater than all his kind. His faith is greater than his belief, wherefore he is without a religious conscience and unscrupulous as to his end. He deceives people. He wears a mask often over all his motives so that he may reap the result of his motives and be ultimately understood. If he says, "My end is my own self-expression and my own glory for that end," then none will follow him; but if he says, "My end in the world's end and the world's glory and benefit, and the exaltation and liberation from oppression of my fellow-men," then the world is peopled by believers who will flock to his standard and fight with him,

and aid him, all unwittingly, to accomplish his own concealed motives—the glorification and ultimate expression of himself. Men will listen to the king, while the beggar may howl himself hoarse in the street and none regard him. So the beggar must overcome that which is between him and the king's throne and speak at last from the throne. And the vain man knows men will believe he is what he is not and read into his work what is not there; and he deliberately sets out to deceive these men and assumes kings' and gods' qualities, and plays at being the ideal of men, which is the highest language understood by men. And whilst awed and reverent and silent these deceived men listen, he will give unknown to them and to himself the real message he was born to deliver to the world of men.

III.

Vanity has been defined by one of the profoundest of all thinkers as the "fear of appearing original." But is this fear not a great desire not to be original, and a heart understanding of the uselessness of appearing original? Life is a language in which experiences are told, and it were great folly to tell anything in a language that nobody understands. Only fanatics, criminals, believers, non-conformers, and men of principles and consciences and imperfect gods, are original men. Vain men are imitators and conformers always, and they know instinctively that the slightest originality in them is a suggestion that points towards and threatens to expose all that which is their greatest strength over men—the weakness

that they successfully conceal. Imitation is not consistent with freedom, we are led by the teachers of freedom to believe. Imitation, we are told by the so-called wisest of men, is following and serving, and we cry, "We will not imitate, we do not imitate;" but ideal free men have cried thus before us, and we but imitate them. We all follow, and we all serve, for, as we live we imitate, and only by being as expressed desires can we express our own desires. We are born into a world of results, and life education is but an examination into results and the cause and effect of results, and we but learn as best we may, how to achieve like results, or greater like results; but we must learn how the results were achieved, and imitate and follow the way of the achievers. Our heroes colour our finest dreams, and we would all be as our heroes. In our heroes we see the greatest conformers and imitators of the world's ideal. We watch, and at last, be we greatly vain, become only interested in winners and masters, and mastery is life artistship, and we would all be masters. We imitate but our own ideal, but our ideal is, as it were, coloured in the deeds of our heroes, and as we imitate the better, the higher amongst men we mount. We can only go the way to greatness, and greatness is recognition by the world, of good life-artistship, by the way our fathers and forefathers have gone before us. There they stand, men who have won applause and glory, judged by the world of men, compared by the world of men with the Great Common Ideal, which is the heart ideal of the world of men. And if we can go where they have gone, by the way they have gone, and ultimately beyond them, so too will we be judged

and take our stand amongst the winners in the Great Common Ideal of men. The people will set us in the market-place of their heroes, and the fierce joy that comes to us with our darkness working, that is so often mistaken for the end itself of the work we do, is the certain faith knowledge our hearts have of the glory that will be ours before or after the end of our lives. But only as we conform to the way of, and imitate—overcoming all desire for originality—our heroes, now standing in the Great Common Ideal, will we gain greatness for ourselves. We can only be artists, runners, players, fighters, explorers, workers, thinkers, and in the Great Common Ideal, stand representative of all these classes of men. To be great one must be great in qualities that according to the world of men are great qualities—to speak with the world one must use the language of the world.

IV.

Original men are non-conformers and never seekers of opinions about themselves. They are self-satisfied, and, therefore, greatly conceited, which the vain man who ever seeks to adorn and magnify himself is not. They truly seek their God's glory and their God's pleasure, and know not that they seek their own glory and their own pleasure. They are self-ignorant, where vain men are self-wise. They are never great conquerors, great artists, great inventors, or any kind of great men whose sought rewards are worldly applause and self-glory. But they, the greatest of them are those who die for their beliefs—the patriots, the martyrs, the philanthropes, the Don Quixotes of life: men who value the opinions of their ideal selves

above the opinions of all the world of men, and would not have their ideal selves conform, as the vain man's ideal self does, to the opinions of the world. And these men, indifferent to outside opinions, are the only men who are not vain. They are men who disguise and hide themselves from themselves. They serve faithfully their ideal selves, their God, and never dream that they please their God, but to please masked selves, and ultimately their real selves. They are men, who knowing not themselves know not what God is not, and how far off Heaven is, and they picture God, or more often take other men's pictures of God, and believe in the pictures, because they know not what they are, and what God is not. And they erect Babylon towers to reach the heavens and set up ladders to pluck down the stars. They have no ideal whatever of perspective or distance. They would over-step the Present moment and reach the end of the ages in a day, and outstride the inexorable mountain-like advance of evolution. And they bind down the ambitious man and show him how ambitious he is; and they set the poet to the building of the Babylon tower, till he breaks into a song of the sorrows his toil brings him, and he finds out what a singer he is, and what a power there is in song. The conceited men, the original men, the true believers, are enemies and resistances against all progress, and, yet, the resistance against which all leaders of progress come in the end to find their own power.

V.

Many men, probably the great majority of men, believe in "art for art's sake," and that men live only

for the sake of living. When one man toils through a youth of pain to perfect himself in art, and his art is to be his language of expression, never will they believe that his end is not the pleasure the art will bring him, but the understanding of the audience before whom his art must speak, and the applause that signifies that understanding. They believe men fight for the pleasure of fighting, think for the pleasure of thinking, act in all ways for the pleasure of acting. They will not believe that the greatest warriors seek but the applause of the, perhaps unborn, watchers of the fight; that the greatest thinkers think but for the reward the world will give in glory for great thinking; and that great actors act only as poor players for the appreciation of the men and women in the galleries and the stalls. But it is so. If a man is born with a message to deliver—and the fierce burning unrest and vast enthusiasm that makes a man greatly vain is in itself a message to be delivered—then must he gain the ears of the world and learn the world's language; and he does not suffer all his toils and hardships—even if he himself believes he does—but for the unrewarded shouting of his message at the earless flowers, or the mountains, or the forest trees. He is the born instrument and slave of his time, or the time that follows closely upon his death. His education is but an examination of the ideals of the world, that he might know one so well as to be able to conform greatly to it. He is the instructor and amuser and would-be finest play-actor, and always server of his own kind. And the part he would play is set for him by the desires and will of the men before whom he acts. He would shape their, as yet,

unshaped ideals, and the shaping of those ideals will be the shaping also of his deepest feelings, the expression of himself. Life is for him as the old Sphinx riddle. The riddle is set and he advances on to the stage, dons the robes of custom and tradition, and plays the answer before his questioners, the riddle-makers, the world of men. All he seeks is, their approval, their applause, and his own present or ultimate glory: and the only way for him is to conform to the will of the audience and play the part the present or future majority, or the representatives of the majority, desires. And he enters upon the stage and begins the imitation of his finest dreams, and his dreams are only mind-drawn pictures of heroes in the Great Common Ideal. Originality he knows is folly. His mind must be ever on his audience. He must interest and attract, and, in the end, claim the eyes and ears of the audience. In action and word he must be perfect in the language of the men before whom he acts. And it matters not how much or how little he thinks of individual contemporary men, though he may know it not, he is a fated high priest, and ever most faithful server of mankind. He is a deceiver for he wears a mask, but he deceives but to serve, and he himself is often amongst the ones whom he deceives. For all his wisdom and far-seeing into the hearts of men, when following his own pleasure, but rarely will it occur to him that he follows and obeys blindly the words of After-men, and that his very pleasure is an instinctive hearing of their far-off applause. He toils but for glory, sure and certain in his heart of the some day coming of that glory, and knows not that that glory is the all-commanding

voice of the fore-god, Posterity. He works and suffers all manner of ills that in the end After-men, and even highest Present-men, will know and understand him; but this is not the end he consciously sees. He is blind to the last end and wilfully hides that end beneath his ever-luring and power-giving dreams. And like the woman of society who deforms herself to become beautiful, to conform to the present-day ideal of beauty for the day, and is careless of the certain pain payment of the morrow—like the flower that as it grows more beautiful attracts so often its own death—so with cold, unfeeling eyes he watches his mind and reason drawn pictures of his own end, worn out, feeble, lonely, and misunderstood, or with the appetite no more that hungered so for the glory that might then be his, and is not in any way deterred from his life task, his inexorable forward going to the grand, final expression of himself. His reason tells him he cannot gain the end he seeks, but his heart sings of an end he will gain, far beyond the sight of reason; and joyful in his great faith he leaves his home and home comforts and sacrifices the so much desired lesser things for the one greater thing, and enters the wilderness, beyond which his glory lies. The vain man dreams in his heart, and only he can value applause in the suffering that is offered for the applause. Before him, by his heart dreams, his worldly future is softened and glorified. Before him, on the grey mists of time, whence, vague and huge the Future looms like the forthcoming of a sleep-dream, are all beautiful, all desired things like sunbeams seen through falling spray. Very blind he may be and is, the greatest life artist, the greatest vain man, and

yet how far-seeing, how wise his heart is. How he approaches the gods that move in the world's dreams!

VI.

The vanity conscience has superseded the love conscience, the sensual passion, amongst the highest forms of life as the motivating and controlling force of that life. The longing for glory is greater than, and has absorbed in the highest men, the longing for sensual pleasures. And in time the vanity conscience will be superseded by pure reason. Then men will act, neither spurred on by lust, nor a man-made "good conscience," nor by vanity, but because they will know and see an ultimate and now unseen influence of their acts. And as now they seek consciously their God's praise, or the world's applause, and instinctively the world's understanding, so in the ages to be will they know consciously, as they now know instinctively, that to be understood is the aim of life; and they will act because they will know, as now they do not, why they act. Vanity is, as the man-made religious good conscience, a chain that holds the aboriginal man to necessary, although always rebelled against, convention. He would be original, but to win glory he must confirm to the desires of men, and speak in the language of men. Vanity leads the most powerful man to action, that by the results of that action he will the better conform to the still necessary convention. Being the motive of all that is highest in art, it has also the humility of all expressive art; and the vainest man is always in the end the best world-serving man

And the leader, the best world-server, is always the least conceited of men. He is not aware of, or deceived by, a false valuation of his own strength. He knows that he is not more or less than any man, and cannot advance into time before the world of his own kind. And his opinions about himself he counts as little against the opinions of the majority of men of the world. To gain the good and evade the bad opinions of that majority is his end and aim in life. He is the ambitious man—the dreamer, the idealist, the discontented and by no means self-satisfied man, for would he not have the world of men believe he is more, a thousand times more than what he believes he is? He builds for himself an ideal man that he would be, and his ideal is not himself, but a glorified self, and all the ideal qualities are not qualities that he possesses, but world-applauded qualities, that he would have the world believe he possesses. He would be the man, the most beautiful to the world, the world's ideal man. To win the world's good opinion, to win glory, that is his only conscious aim; but his instinctive aim is beyond his conscious sight. He would, seeking his instinctive end, depict the over-man, and after-coming men, seeking to live up to his description, and in the end finding themselves in his description, will realize his picture, and produce the over-man. Describing truly his great longing, he describes Truth. He is an architect of the monument of mankind. He is a forerunner of gods.

CHAPTER IV.

THE RULING PASSION.

I.

"HIS life had fallen on grey wintry days when she came to him, and she came as the Spring will come into an old garden, and all because he loved himself and she was as the sunshine that matured and glorified his love of himself." Is this the love the poets of all nations have sung about through a thousand ages? Or is it a love of a day beyond the earliest men, a modern love? She believed she worshipped him, but did she worship him or the part he played? And would he have been so pleased had she worshipped him and not the part he played? The brute the first man was, and the god the last man will be. And man's instincts ever urge him on towards the god. If it were not so he would not yet be a man. The first man in his dreams shapes the last man, the ideal man, and living is aping of one's dreams. But ever as he grows, the finer, more true to detail, more realistic his dream picture becomes. He would have his life imitation of his dreams pass with all men as the realization of their ideal men. He would be the coming god. And if the woman worships the part he plays, then conforming to his own ideal he knows he conforms to her

ideal, and she applauds his playing and accepts his ideal as the coming god. The brute depends upon and therefore loves and will serve his kind, but the man grows more and more independent of other men for his life expression as his art faculties and understanding increase. He loves then but his exalted self, which is his god, and the god he would have worshipped and served by all men. He is the high priest and lover only of his own ideal; and loving means serving. I love means I serve; and making others love us is making them serve our god; and happiness lies in serving those whom we love.

II.

Life is art, and all men are artists, and in life all men would express as greatly as they may, themselves. And we would power all men to express ourselves, and the more powerful are the men we can power the greater will the expression of ourselves become. Men and women we would employ as necessary instruments in the shaping of ourselves, as we use pens to write our names with or knives to carve them on rocks. A man greatly loves a woman because instinctively he recognizes in her a means to his ideal of life. She is as necessary to him for the expression of himself as the pen or pencil would be to the man who would write. And he loves her physically as the beast man once was or mentally as the god man will be. In the first case she embraces his ideal, shapes his whole ideal, and he lives but to beautify and serve her, and by thus doing beautify also the expression he desires of himself, the

children she will bring him. These children he knows instinctively will possess qualities that he does not possess, qualities that are necessary for the expression of certain of his desires. He instinctively knows his own imperfection, and the impossibility of his ever in art form being able to express himself. But in the woman he loves he sees qualities that he lacks, and the children he craves of her will possess, wedded to his own qualities, the qualities he instinctively knows her to possess and himself to lack. To produce a more perfectly expressed self, that is the aim of all men and all things. And such a man cannot express his desires in art or in life works, so he seeks and will rear and protect and give his all to the child, the more perfect man who will express his desires as he cannot express them. The instinct of such a man is to serve. There is more of the first man than of the last man in him. He is nearer the beginning than the end of mankind. But the instinct of the man who loves mentally is always to lead. The woman of his choice does not embrace his ideal, but is embraced by that ideal. He is the born artist, probably the man the first man craves for a child, the more perfect man. In his art he can greatly express himself, and is therefore not so dependent upon the woman for that expression. And he cannot love her as passionately or faithfully as the first man. The woman he seeks is only a prize desired by the other men, an adornment, a beautifier of himself. When he gains her, like all other prizes, her value begins to decline. His eyes wander then to other women. But the woman sought by the first man is that man's end in life. As the mother and guardian

of his children, she must be protected and guarded from all dangers by him. To serve her is to serve his ideal. But with the other man to serve his ideal, the woman he seeks must serve him. The more and better a man can express himself in words or actions, the more perfect man he is, and the desire cannot be so great in him to produce another man to express him, as it is with the less perfect man who cannot in life-language express himself.

III.

As man's power of imagining increases, so man becomes more as the god. He perceives and dream-shapes the better that god, and the more hope is there in him, and the greater is his desire to become as his dreams. In his dreams he has shaped a conscious ideal, and if he loves a woman, she is only a means to that ideal. But for the man without such powers of imagining, the woman he loves becomes his conscious ideal, because he does not know, cannot dream-shape, what is his instinctive ideal, to which the woman, as with the other man, is really only a means. And the first man is a self lover, an individualist, and his love of self is greater than his love for any other thing, and his love of his work is greater than for any child any woman could give him. But the woman for the second man becomes more than himself, and the child she would give him would be more to him than any work he ever could do. And he becomes the slave of the woman he loves, but the slave who serves but as all men serve, to gain what is to him only an instinctive end. And the individualist serves his ideal as

the other serves the woman he loves. Does he love a woman, then she becomes a sort of opponent who must be overcome and made to serve that which he loves greater than the woman, his ideal. The woman is, by her rank and beauty and authority with men, an adornment greatly desired by him. She is a symbol of power. The greater the one he overcomes the greater is he. If he can make a beautiful woman love him, he does that which other men desire, and are powerless to do, and adds to the expression of his ideal. He recognizes in the desired woman, one worthy of all his cunning and the cleverness of his ideal-playing art. He finds out her ideal and conforms in words and action as well as he can to that ideal. He stoops to conquer. He conceals himself from her. He becomes her slave with but one idea, and that is that he shall rule her and become her king. And he would have all those who desire her desire what he possesses and follow him. He would be the leader of the people and have the leader of the people love him and serve him by loving, so that the people will serve his god and recognize his ideal.

IV.

The time draws near when facts, facts that have through long ages been covered over by warnings and traditions and conventions and superstitious fears, and have been trodden on like new earth-breaking plants at every first appearance, will burst forth in spite of all opposing forces and must be boldly faced. And all the fear-made awe and ugliness of a thing is likely to vanish before a bold facing of it, as the

divinity of the sun and stars before the telescope of the astronomers and scientists. The meanest thing and the mightiest thing, now we are beginning to know, contain, perhaps, the same material and are motivated by the same God. The loveliest flower differs only in arrangement from the offal that rots itself into new life forms on the dunghill. And the so-called morbid love of the miser for his gold, does not afford him less pleasure and is not less a true love than the song and story exalted love of the man for the maid. And the black-browed man who seeks beneath every silver cloud its darkest lining, for so long the very personification of unhappiness, now we are beginning to suspect, is not less happy than the innocent child who romps in spring fields and sings and dances to the song of birds and the silent music of flowers. The very gods of old come down to us; or is it not rather that we, climbing laboriously upwards through the past generations, have reached at last the snow-engirdled haunts of the old gods? Villains and heroes merge and become one for us. Good and evil become—convenient and inconvenient. We love less and hate less; we become impersonal. But people who see in our perfected selves, marble like men, beings entirely disinterested and inactive, forget that we do not feel less but probably a thousand times more. We have robbed ourselves of heroes and gods who are but time-glorified heroes. We have robbed ourselves of a religious motive to life, and our children are no longer everything to us, and cannot supply or replace the religious motive. But there is the higher vanity that has absorbed and superseded lust. We will not fight to preserve the land for our

children, nor fight for the people we love against those whom we hate. But we will fight and strive to overcome, more fiercely and grandly than ever, to win the applause of the many and of the great who are representatives of the many. Our vanity will be our conscience and the guardian of our ideal. And as that vanity increases within us so our art power of expression will become more, and our physical love passion by comparison grow less. And with our vanity conscience we will feel pains and pleasures as other men feel them with their religious consciences and their physical beings. We will hunger for triumphs and glory as other men hunger for food for their children, and we will strive for our vanity triumphs and glory, as the fathers do to appease the appetites of their children. Our pains and pleasures will be in non-conforming or conforming to the good opinions of present men or men to be. A man is more as the gods when he feels the most, and the men greatly vain know purely mental pleasures and pains that are all unknown to those who are not vain.

V.

And the greatly vain men always are and always have been and always will be the leaders of the world. It is only because of them that man is more than the beast. They are always the greatest artists, the greatest self-expressers. They are the explorers into the unknown, the greatly curious, the greatly adventurous. To make the unknown the known is to win applause. They lead men into the desert, into the study of gods and men and atoms and stars, into

the Past, into the Future. They are always restless and motionful. Their vanity is and can be, never satisfied. It craves for all that other men desire. It would gain all that and be desired by, and therefore, followed by all men. Calm, peace, content, monotony, are the qualities most hateful to it, the resistance against which it expresses itself and which for that expressing it must overcome. So the vain man is the evil man of his age and the enemy of his time, because these very conditions, so hateful to him, are the beloved and always sought qualities of the majority of his fellow-men. The expression of the desires of these men lies with their children, and these children they would protect and educate and send forth into the world better loved by them than they love themselves. They are the patriots and philanthropes and religious men, the good and highly respectable citizens. They toil all through their lives at work in which they have no interest, so that their children shall be fed and equipped to follow in their steps. They die readily for their country, so that others will follow them and be inspired to high courage and enthusiasm in protecting the country that will protect their children. They will make that country secure and high amongst nations. They will make and keep its laws. They will build vast cities and open up railroads and schools. And even, the at first cursed and doubted inventions and scientific discoveries of the vain man, they will in the end use for the benefit and prosperity of the succeeding generations. Peace and security they desire above all things, and they go to war only to make peace. Their first thoughts always are their wives and

children and home and country. But the vain man's first thoughts and last thoughts are for himself. His inventions and discoveries are to win him glory. If he leads an army to conquest, whatever the object of the war in which he leads, his first object is his own glory.

VI.

The man who is not vain is a would-be practical Socialist and an instinctive aristocrat. He is the most passionate lover, and, therefore, also the most faithful friend. He is necessarily of a short-seeing intellect and of a very limited imagination. He is dependent upon other men and women, and they become prominent parts in his ideal, and he is very reverent before them. He serves them because he instinctively knows his own limitations, and sees that they are essential to the expression of himself. He is not and cannot be self-reliant. He believes where the vain man thinks. He accepts without questioning a man-made religion and man-imposed duties. He is not a self-lover, and will often die for the benefit of his kind, or, what he believes will be the benefit of his kind. The State will protect him and his children, so the State must be fought for and served and upheld in all ways. His conscious ideal is the future of his race, and he conforms and would have all men conform to laws and religion-imposed duties, and sacrifices personal pleasure for the good of the race. He is a born conserver of power and the best maker of future men, for all his conserved power will be in his children. He is the best and bravest foot-soldier in the ranks of the army of progress. But for all his

belief in the benefits of a practical socialism, his instinctive ideal is the aristocrat. For who is such a hero-maker and hero-worshipper as he is? and the ideal child he craves would be such a hero and always a leader of all his kind. And his ideal man is always a vain man, an individualist, a born aristocrat. He believes in equality of all men, and yet looks up to and admires as no other man does—rank!

VII.

And his antithesis the greatly vain man does not admire or praise or worship rank. If he looks up, then, he desires what he looks up to. The admiration and praise of men who are not vain he knows means in time the converting of men like himself into gods. The men who are not vain will grant him motives that would be their motives but are not his. Superstition and fear will in time surround and envelop his deed—painted personality, and enormify and glorify him as forms are in a morning mist. He knows—if he does not for a little while lose himself in seeking the end as many vain men, students, scientists, warriors do—that his only end is glory. Heroes are only for him, new summits to be gained, new winners to be excelled. If he watches a race or a game, he becomes in his dreams the conqueror of the winners in the race or the game; and the pain of his dream destroying by reality is that which urges him on to become as his dreams. And with each achievement of his, desire becomes greater and more imperious and more powering. He does not deceive himself. He knows that his life ideal is to appear as

beautiful as possible before the world, and he knows that the life ideal of the rose, of the dog, of the bird, of the woman, is but as his own. And he does not really admire himself. He is only to himself an instrument in the hands of his ideal, the Power that wills him to live; and the pleasure he knows is in conforming to, by expressing and earning the applause, the understanding of his impression, that ideal. If a man dies for an ideal the great vain man studies first the ideal and then the man. If he woos a fine woman, it is because he knows that her fineness gives her a position and her judgment is held as authority by all men. If he watches a bird fly, or a star or a flower, he knows that all these things that attract him will attract and power other men. And he would imitate and be as the bird or the star or the flower. They are expression terms of the desires within him. They are for him beautiful things. He would fly as the bird because he knows other men desire to fly also, and to gain that which others desire is to make them desire him also, and they become, in part, him. They become his followers and therefore his instruments. They are in his pay. At his word they move from his path and help to move others who block the way he desires to go. He powers them to express himself. He attempts to fly. He studies and seeks to imitate the bird so closely as to become as the bird, as in his art he seeks to become as the star or the flower. And by-and-by the problem of flight will be solved and he, the discoverer, will become in time the hero to be surpassed by vain men like himself, an object to be studied and imitated and out-imitated, but the god of

men who are not vain. And he plays his part. He will be the god of these people as he will be the ideal of the fine woman he woos. If she chooses him from amongst the line of suitors, his all-devouring vanity is soothed for a little while; he has played his part well, imitated his god well. He deceives the woman, lies to her by his part playing, but never does he believe his own lies. And how can he admire, when he goes before her with a clumsily, hastily woven mask of her ideal over his being, and he finds she has not eyes sharp enough to detect his fraud? Can he admire her conceit that believing him the very god part he plays, she can yet hold herself, the one of all the world chosen by the god? Can he admire either those whom he defeats by fraud or she who judges and rewards him, defeated too by his fraud? If he does not win his vanity is hurt, but in comparison with the hurt of more physically-passioned lovers, after all, his is but a small thing. He but plays a game where they live. He is sad to-day, self-pitying, self-comforting, but to-morrow brings more interest, more thought or action food, and the study of his own failure even is often of hurt-absorbing interest to him. Truth he knows is the light of all the world and lies are only small shadows that flit like moths before the light, but cannot conceal and blot out the ever-increasing rays of that light. If he defeats little truths with little lies it is pleasure, and if little truths defeat and reveal his little lies, it is pain; but both these pleasures and pains apply as it were to his secondary or man-contacting self; and his above-the-world-self, his god-self, is a watcher and perceiver of this lesser self and the effect of its environment upon

it. Defeated to-day he beholds the sting of defeat gradually fading away in new-rising future-shaping dreams, and to-morrow he beholds the lesser self rushing forth with renewed enthusiasm to seek new victories and to substantiate his dreams. For vain men life is all imitating and then out-imitating. Beyond the great heights they know are greater heights. Beyond the mountain peaks are the stars; and beyond the greatest of men their dreams go to find their gods. So Napoleon would out-Cæsar Cæsar, and Schopenhauer would out-think Plato, and Nietzsche would out-think Schopenhauer. Where great vain men are concerned there is no end—it is always an out-fighting, out-seeing, always an out-doing.

CHAPTER V.

THE AGE.

I.

PERHAPS the surest sign of the progress of civilization and the greatness of our age, is the manner in which we, the members of it, criticize the lives of great men. No longer we make gods of our heroes and fiends of our ideal villains, but we seek the mortal qualities in the gods and demons of even the olden times. And the more mortal they are the more they now appeal to us. The god-inspired and god-protected heroes are not our heroes, but our heroes are those who conform best to our ideal selves, who are most like what we, ourselves, would be. Ourselves,—are we beginning to become aware at last of our own significance and vast importance as we know ourselves? As we draw nearer to the gods, the gods, we find, become more and more as we are. We are no longer so greatly reverent and fearful as once we were. We apply our own motives to Shakespeare and Napoleon. We begin to think, studying fearlessly great men, that could we see into the secret of things, perhaps, what would surprise us most would be, that compared with great men, how great we all are.

II.

I have heard men say that on first understanding a work of great art, they have felt as never before, their own insignificance and powerlessness. — But this should not be. Once we realize, we understand, we know we know, and have always known, what is only retold to us in the work of art. We have not drawn the artist down to our level, but we know we have climbed up to his. We have analyzed and studied, probably unconsciously, our own feelings; we know our own feelings, and are ready to recognize them when they are placed in art form before us. And when we recognize them, when we understand the work of a great artist, at once we should become aware of a depreciation in our minds valuing of the artist. He has lost now, all that old-time mystery that used to surround and enormify him. He is no longer a god who saw where we cannot see, for understanding him, we view the world from heights above him; all that he saw is included in our stretch of vision—we see further and more than ever he could see. Our understanding of his work is a recognition of our own experience retold in his words. In his works he has expressed feelings of his own, and we find there expressed our own feelings. And the end of life is expression of self, and life is a quest of expression terms. We seek the god the last and perfect man shall be, but we seek and would express all of him that is in ourselves. And what is the great artist but a truth teller? He has sought an answer to his desires and has found and expressed in a little way the shape of his inmost self. And we, because we

behold ourselves in the expression, know the truth of the expression, and he, something to be imitated, something that adds to our language of truth expression, is a beautiful thing to us, until we perfectly understand him. He is for us until then a goal, a desired thing. For we are still truth seekers and would-be truth tellers; and the greatest artist, be he painter, writer, worker, fighter, expresses greatly the truth we seek, and where we find truth we know will be more truth, and he is our ideal man, the man we would be. But when we read in his works or actions, ourselves expressed, we know then that he is as we are; and we only bow with true reverence before him when we do not understand him, and he is still unknown and beyond us. But once we understand, we rob him of all his divinity. We have found he is one with us. He no longer powers us, but his power becomes our power. He is as the flower that attracts us by its beauty as it grows in the garden, and that we pluck and wear as an adornment and beautifier of ourselves, until it droops, and withers, and fades away. For once we truly understand a thing its beauty must go from it, and its value decreases as it falls behind our ever-growing understanding. We seek, and when we have found, absorb beautiful things. They become part of us, possessions of ours, and are no longer desired things. They cease almost to interest and concern us. We can be no longer truly grateful to them because they shaped our desires and brought us pleasure in the Past. Only that which will give us pleasure in the Future is desired by us. The beautiful things we have absorbed are like the food we pictured when we were starving, but the food we

in the end ate and which appeased our hunger. When we cease to hunger for a thing, neither the thing itself, nor the truest description of it, can ever more be beautiful to us.

III.

Pliny the Younger once wrote, "that he never read a book so bad but what he drew some profit from it." Do we ever learn anything from the best books but authority and confirmation of what we know? How can we criticize what is in any book but by a comparison with what is in ourselves? and is not the very criticism but a finding and knowing of ourselves? If we study *Hamlet*, where do we look for the Hamlet, wherewith to compare the poet's description, save it be in ourselves? We are continually storing impressions, continually watching and observing, as continually as the sun shines. And it only needs the throwing of a light beam into our well-stored depths to show how busy the most idle of us have been and how really wise we are. Shakespeare draws a certain character, and if we can say the character is well or ill drawn, we must have known such a character in life, and we must remember what it was like. Our memories must be as clear and truthful as that of him whose drawing we criticize. Lesser artists we certainly are, but we are none the less observant, none the less wise. We know, but we cannot tell; the time is not yet ready for us; the art that would be ours is not yet born. And no matter how bad a book may be there is profit to be had from the reading and criticizing of it, for if we find

in it untruth, we become aware also of the truth. If we see in a book what we are not and what is false to our experience, do we not shape our own experience and know a little more of what we are? And with thinking it is likewise. It is criticism of our own thoughts and ideas that becomes our ultimate thoughts and ideas. True criticism is only comparison: we compare what we see with what we feel. And when we find at last something—a flower, a star, a work of art, that describes well our feelings, we welcome it as the truth, and the true thing is the beautiful thing.

IV.

To the scientist, the sun, moon, and stars, once fearful, worshipped, divine bodies, are no more now than glorified atoms, and he neither fears them nor is grateful to them; they are powerless to inspire feelings within him, for before his searching eyes their mystery has fled, and he knows they are motived as he is motived, and he only studies them as expression of the motive that is behind them. And if we are to understand a work of art, the artist must become for us as the heavenly bodies are to the scientist. He must be no longer a mystery-shrouded, awe-inspiring being in himself. We will study him fearlessly for the motives behind him. Behind his words we will seek the man, and behind the man, until we understand him, will be the god. And the greatest genius shall be he who conceals himself even while he reveals himself most thoroughly from our search. Always giving, he will always withhold something

more than he gives, and what he gives will suggest the value of that which he withholds. He will for ever hold and claim our interest as the secrets of the sun hold the interest of the scientist. And he shall be one who knows himself, and paints in present-day terms the deepest and most far-reaching truth. He shall describe truly what he sees and suggest by his description what is beyond what he sees. His work shall contain something luring and ever light-giving, but something that to the deepest diving and self-sounding of us will remain in the end unattained by us. Always in sight he shall always be before us, leading us. Not a pearl will be thrust into our hands, but a pearl whose rays we see dimly luminous in the depths, will he point out for us; a pearl we must fathom ourselves and our souls to find; a pearl that we shall feel is below all, even when our eyes fail us and reason preaches in finest rhetoric the folly of our way-going. The work of such a man will whisper like stillest solitude, of an idea that is only a shadowy outline of something enormous and awfully grand, of something as boundless as space is; that yet rouses the imagination to a sense of its own likeness to this thing, and of its own infinite possibilities. Such a work of art will be always beautiful to us, because it will be always beyond our conscious understanding. But when we understand, then we have fathomed the work and the artist behind the work—all that he knows of himself we know of ourselves—we have found his depths and the once all-alluring pearls that lay there. And now we throw them into the coffers of our experience, absorb them. They have lost their mystery and their first

lustre; they hold nothing we desire; they are no longer beautiful to us.

V.

Why should we worship? Under all the comfort-taking and responsibility, giving of worship is a certain great folly. We, who are men motivated and purposed, as all men are motivated and purposed, and set to a certain inevitable and essential course in life,—are we more or less than any man? And God,—does the tool worship the hand that employs it for its own purpose? And when we express our feelings, and our feelings are our God's desires of us, then our feelings expressed are part of us, as the petal or perfume is part of the flower; and the pen or brush or tool that expresses our feelings in art shapes, lives whilst it expresses, and becomes filled with our desires, and would but achieve our purpose, and becomes for the time—we who express ourselves. And when we express the desires of our God, do we not whilst we act, become that God? And what are sympathies of friends, and hatreds of enemies, and all lesser vanities that we must overcome, but the frictions and gravities, and hardnesses and softnesses of the material God would fashion to the shape of His desires? To overcome all these small resistances is our end, because it is the end of our God. We are as pens with which God writes part of the world's history, and that history is the story of his own desires. We are expressions of God, and expressions of ourselves are again expressions of God. When God is perfectly expressed and the brain-wisdom of man becomes as his heart-wisdom, then man becomes

the God he now worships. And when we follow pleasure we do God's will, and the way we desire to go, and we only live to go the way we desire to go, must be the way we are willed to go. And in our dreams we should be neither worshipful of God nor reverent of man. We are willed towards the ideal man which is the fore-shadow of God himself, and our ideal man's qualities shall be those of the winners of Past and Present-day history; and in our dreams we behold ourselves adorned with the qualities of such men, and in life the great desire, the great longing is to be as our dreams.

VI.

Only ambitious men, and would-be leaders of men, dream greatly, and their dreams are coloured in qualities that are held in highest repute with the contemporary age, and are, therefore, the signs of the age and the gods of the age. And the Greek gods were but as the man of the present century. Already has he become as the highest dream of the Greeks. He has conquered the kingdoms of the earth and the sea and the air, and now his sighs are for other worlds, and he seeks to communicate with distant stars. His words fly round the earth swifter than winged Mercuries. His eyes search like the old god's messengers into unseen atoms, and about unseen stars. He employs the sea, the air, the sun, the moon for his own uses. He razes when he will vast cities, floods whole countries, dams and redirects the course of rivers, creates mountains and seas, controls the wind and the rain, and uses for his own pleasure

the power of the lightning and the clouds. Few things are there the Greek gods could do that he cannot do. And were the Greeks not wiser in looking forward beyond their children for their gods than the after-coming Christians in looking back? Looking back to a loving, hating, jealous, generous, altogether Adam-and-Eve qualified ideal man—the Christian God? The Greeks looked to the unborn, their gods possessed the qualities of the dreams of the greatest of their kind; their gods were only ideal selves. But the Christian God wears the qualities of men who have been ages dead; His qualities are animal qualities. Man cannot war successful against his natural desires. Once he has become wise, he cannot unlearn his wisdom; and man cannot, and could not, ever become as the Christian God. Worshipping that God he has no ideal to aspire to. Against all the desires of himself and the tendencies of all things, he would halt or move back upon his own steps. And nearly two thousand years have sped by, teaching him the impossibility of his task. But at last, as always they must, have triumphed his desires, and he comes as the man of the new century, the reaper of all the two thousand years misdirected and unspent, and, therefore, conserved force, to show the truth of the prophecy dreams of the ancients, to live as the Greek gods. Pleasure is all: the ultimate object of every movement is to escape from some pain, to gain some pleasure, and the way to pleasure, —is it not by mounting upwards, going forwards, seeking to become our finest dreams, seeking to be as our gods? And our gods? Are they not the men whom we knowing we cannot be, would have be,

the far-off children of our children? "Thou shalt not dream," commanded the Christian God, and for two thousand years the world stood still in the great truth-seeking. Life, but the Christians were forbidden to know this, is a pursuit of dreams.

VII.

We serve posterity. We would be greater than all men, but we know however great we are, the men to come will be greater than we. And therefore the greater we are, the greater they must be. We are like winners in a race, and we all strive to break old and create new records that must be broken. Men worship the Past, but the only God is beyond the Future. Men worship and revere, and are grateful to their ancestors, but the greatest men are in the time to be. Man's only concern, though he knows it not, is with posterity. Who does he live and toil and ultimately die for, if not for posterity? Why does he build his ever truth-seeking road save for the feet of his children to tread? Every expression of a desire is a seed cast into the Present that will grow and influence all the Future and be reaped, ultimately, by the great unborn. We reveal truth—and men who lie most do not always reveal truth least—that there will be less for posterity to reveal.

VIII.

Men who are reverent and believing, and, therefore, thoughtful, cannot dream, and their God must be a ready-made God; their ideal must be the unquestioned ideal of other men; they can have none of their own.

But this is a scientific and thoughtful, and, therefore, dream-forming and god-making age. Its gods, like the gods of the Greeks, are super-men. It bounds swiftly, fiercely, joyfully forward like a hound that has long heard its master's calling and has been straining upon the leash. We, the members of it, are learning first of all things to doubt appearance and the judgments and commands of our forefathers. For science and thought are they not always overcomers of sentiment and belief? Suns and atoms, gods and great men, what are they to us? We are, gradually at first, but ever more surely and swiftly, becoming less credulous. As we know more of ourselves, we come to know more also of other things, and we become more and more as we should be—our own standards of measurement and valuation. Beauty and greatness, good and evil—as the light flows from the sun do not all qualities of all things flow forth from ourselves? And our own feelings,—are they not the supreme and only qualifiers? Less reverent and fearful we become, and more wise, as we believe less, and question more. When we find the greatest men are motivated only as we are motivated, seek to achieve the purpose that is our purpose, that their God is our God, and that only the accidental arrangement of Time and Circumstance will make their names larger in history than ours, do we believe so much then in the so much sought greatness? Yet we would all be great. We believe less, but our faith grows and becomes more. And we,—be we first or last men, are of the age. And the age,—does not the sign of it indicate above all things, the new beginning of a decay of belief?

CHAPTER VI.

HOPES AND FEARS.

I.

SOME day man will live in accordance with pure Reason. Now he crosses a street or goes into a room, or moves his hand, and he might not know why he does these things. But the time will come when man shall know why he does all little and great things. Then man shall be as God. If a stone is cast into a pool of water, the encircling waves are apparently limited by the shores of the pool, but in reality there is no such limitation, and eternity alone must receive the effect of the so simply started vibration. And every act of ours, however great or trivial it might be, reaches in its effect the Beginning and the End, the wish and the accomplishment of the wish. The vibration takes a new form in the earth. It is not visible to our conscious sight. It is even beyond the sensibility of our most sensitive instruments. And we are like the pool of water that receives the cause, and our acts are the eternity-effecting waves started by that cause. And every effect is a new cause and every desire of God travels like a wave through all time. And as only for a little while we may see the waves on the pool, so, only for a little while we may trace the influence and effect of

our actions in our conscious sight. But ever intelligence increases, and we seek even now conscious ends that were once instinctive, far-beyond-sight ends. All men are dreamers, and all have their life ideals. Imagination is contained by the outer darkness, and on the darkness as on a wall is pictured all that we know. We dream, and we live but to become as our dreams. If a man goes into a shop, or walks in the country, or does anything whatever, the immediate or the ultimate object is the fulfilment of his dreams and the accomplishment of his ideal. And when each man knows what his ideal really is, then shall he know that the ideals of all men are but the one ideal. And in his heart-wisdom even now he knows this, and sees the possibility of the realization of his finest dreams when all about the brain sight is the blackness of vast depths that signifies only despair and not a star is there to light the possibility of his ever being as his dreams. We believe we live according to reason, follow always our brain guidance, but only do we do so when brain-wisdom keeps us close to the way of heart-wisdom; and if we go a little way off that path, fast enough gather about us doubtings and confusion and back we run to our heart's way again. In our hearts we are all infinitely wise and our outlook is always bright; we are always optimists, for the heart's knowledge of the future is our hope.

II.

Why do those people live who sing the pleasures of death, and see only sorrow and misery and pain in life? Are they so blind that they do not see the

pleasure they gain from their very singing of sad songs and writing of pessimistic philosophies? Do they fear to die? Then they are unaware of the value they attach to the life that according to them is so worthless and aimless. They must hope. In their imaginations they can picture nothing to hope for, but in their hearts they know. The beauty of brain dreams are but little glimpses into what the heart knows. Hope is the instinct that will one day be brain knowledge, feeling that will one day be action or thought, desire that will one day be pleasure. Let a man be ever so ill, and he still has capacity and still hopes for pleasure. The very pains that tear and rack his being open up voids whereinto pleasure might flow. It is the very pains and horrors that beset life, that wake us to picture and build up what we hope for. Would we hope if we did not know pain? And when I walk in the street repeating to myself passages from *Hamlet* or *Macbeth* or *Measure for Measure*, passages embodying in marvellous language whole pessimistic philosophies, is it because of a sympathy I have with the views expressed; or is it something that strikes a deeper note, not that which the words stand for, but what the music means; that which with every repetition makes me not more unhappy as the word-meaning should, but melancholy a little perhaps, exalted surely? All that the words signify is true, but a greater truth lies beneath that which makes the misery and fear-bringing power of the words little or nothing to me. The witchery of the music strikes a chord below my conscious understanding, and there wakes within me a music that depicts, not pain or

fear, but grand hope, infinite sweetness. In spite of all reasoning, optimism rules the human soul, and man can only understand and appreciate that which shapes his own feelings, that which he is. And the only art that appeals to man is that which, even when wrapping about and distorting and disguising hope, still suggests the hope that, under all, motives human life. A thing in itself repulsive and horrible may be depicted in art with about it a deep sympathetic glamour that exalts it, and blends away and softens all its repulsiveness, because that very repulsiveness becomes as the night darkness that brightens the stars, and reveals the glamour that suggests the innate wonder and beauty of the still unborn God.

III.

Often when we are most sad we are most happy, and though our mouths weep our hearts laugh. And the ideal aim of art is the provocation of heart laughter. Grand sorrow is the richest of all emotions. When we stand before the tombs of our heroes, and weep perhaps, but glory in their death, when we become for the time our heroes, and know all their sorrows and all their pains, but likewise all their fierce, high, fighting joy of the overcoming and expressing of all their sorrows and pains, how sadly happy we are! And would not the grand artist make us more sad than ever we have been, but also so much more happy? Down to the depths of his life's bitterest hours he would take us that we would rise again as he rose, and know all the joy he knew in the rising. What are thoughts and actions but

feelings expressed? And are not all feelings more or less suffering? We must suffer to know, and the artist would have us suffer as he has suffered to know in the end what he knows. In his words and his art forms he will paint—if he is a truly great artist—with awful distinctness, all the pains of his bitterest hours; but in the joy note, the harmony form about the work, will he sing and touch a chord beneath our understanding and wake in us our own grandest and so long sleeping joy. We only converse, have only learned to converse, to tell of and compare our pains; in our words we are pessimists, but in our very pleasure of telling and being understood, we are optimists. We all hope, and our life-calling dreams ever better and better picture and shape, what we hope for, what in our heart wisdom we know will be. And the great artist is but the grand dreamer, and the grand describer of his dreams.

IV.

And is not the greatest dreamer the happiest of all men? The irreverent, conscienceless, and therefore shameless one; the little-believing man of great faith; the depicter of hope; the first minion of God. With his fancies he hides all the sorrows and pains and forebodings of yesterday, and masks with a mask of rare beauty all the sunsets and glooms that threaten storms for to-morrow. He lives but in the Present Moment, and seeks but Present-Moment joys. And his Present Moment is conscious free, almost memory free, walled in its rich beauty. He sets his life to

beauty, to the shaping in his dreams of the fore-ray of the last truth and the light of all the world. Seeking pleasure, he seeks the last truth, and in his dreams he beholds himself finding pleasure and knows the last truth. What man conquers he becomes, and each man would overcome him who holds the beautiful thing each man desires. And man's dreams, are they not coloured in all desired things? Are they not forms of what we are not and what we would become? And the great dreamer knows what he would be and the pleasures within the reach of life. Glory for him is beauty, and he would defeat the men who have gained glory and gain the glory of his victory. In his dreams he is always a winner and hero, and the lesser man one is in his dreams, the lesser will he be in life. And the greatest dreamers are always the greatest men. To adorn themselves, to be more, a thousand times more than themselves, to be kings, heroes, world conquerors, so the great ones dream themselves and live to become as their dreams. By their dreams they are led to action as children follow butterflies on summer days. Life becomes a game, and if they fail, they have power, for mind artists always are they, to weave over the pains of defeat new and beautiful pictures, to erect new dreams on the ruins of the old. All that was beautiful in the Past they re-picture and weave cunningly into the Future they pursue. "Yonder," you will say, bowing your head in reverence, "is a beautiful man." But the dreamer is not reverent. That which is beautiful to you must be studied and known. Only another colour for his dreams is your beautiful man.

V.

Conscious life is like an impressionist picture. We represent and personify our pasts and our memories. But we carry about with us of the Past only the impressive features and incidents blended as it were in deep hiding, magnifying, and belittling shadows. It is all very vague and indistinct and devoid of detail. My way of life is as a silken thread through a vast tapestry, and directly or indirectly I am connected with every other thread. I meet a friend in the street and he is a symbol of the endless world that is my life. He is connected directly or indirectly with every incident in all my career. He is a link absolute and essential. He nods his head and passes on to be lost in the crowd; but he has sent me off to a country I have known in his company, to people I have met; to incidents, to walks, drives, picnics; and with one of the people I go elsewhere, and from thence again elsewhere, and meet other people to take me on, until, once again I reach myself and my Present Moment. And every man I have ever met, every flower I have ever noticed, every star that attracted my attention, is connected with my life as absolutely as is my friend. And everything is recorded in my memory. And my consciousness is only a glimpse into that vast record, more as it were a noting of the heading of chapters than a reading into the matter of the work. And it is strange how the most prominent features are nearly all triumphs and joys, and how the pains and defeats are softened and inclined always to sink away like ghosts into shady places. The little pleasures, the little triumphs

I knew in my blackest days now appear to me far more pleasant and unmingled with pain than reason tells me they could have been. We look back to the days of our youth and there all the days now seem bright and happy, but we know it was not so. And the most dreadful hours of pain we have ever known, —what—now that the mists of time are drawn over them—are they to us? Time heals wounds but does it not magnify pleasure? Hopes are deeper than fears. We remember our past pains when we fear, but we do not fear to live. We have tasted joy in the Past, and the memory of its sweetness braves us to toil on and face greater pains than ever we have known. We magnify our past joys and belittle our past pains. We fear, and in our dreams, in the forms of past pains, depict our fears. But the more dreadful is our fear picture, the greater our hope is that enables us to face and live on in spite of that fear.

CHAPTER VII.

FAITH AND BELIEF.

I.

ONE man they will say is patient, as if forced waiting were patience, and no man waits who is not forced by circumstances to wait, and no man is idle who could act. Another man according to the authorities is ambitious, as if the tool could resist the hand that employs it and be otherwise than filled with the desires that move it towards its end. And one man becomes brave because he fears death or pain and the loss of well loved, greatly valued possessions; and another because he fears the bad opinions of other men; and another because he is blind to the perils that beset his way. And one man is generous because all that he gives will be returned to him, he believes, in the life to come; and another because generosity is a world-favoured quality and he desires the favour of the world. And so will thought rob good men of all their virtues and bad men of all their sins. Why then should I think?

II.

Thought is the Ithuriel spear that banishes all deceit and all delusion. It is a destroyer of such pretty flowers of reason as love, friendship, gratitude,

charity, and all the Christian virtues. It brings us all face to face with reality, and the pain of it causes new thinking and new seeing. The stars look to be within reach of our hands, but thought will reveal what worlds away they are. When we are very young the end of sight is the world's end, and we who know nothing of an outside world, do not know the beauty that our own lacks. But we become wiser in knowledge, and the world grows wider and appearance becomes transparent, and the bounding walls of delusion cease so much to be. The most beautiful things fade away to reveal more beautiful things, and beauty in a way grows farther from us as we see farther, as the stars we find beyond the stars we know. And why should we become wise? why think and give up the little but cosy, sunlit, and nearly always delightful world of our younger days? Ignorance is bliss, and thinking breeds and fires on discontent and brings always trouble and deep sorrow. Why then should I think?

III.

Why should I act? If I travel far I shall return discontented to my own home. If I take my place with the leaders, how ever again shall I march happy and contented with the rank soldiers who were once my comrades and friends in the world's army? If I become rich, I bring but a new fear into my life—there will be the thought of returning to my former state, of becoming poor. If I start to advance I must keep advancing; there must be no halting for me, no turning back. We are all like Eve in the

Garden of Eden, and the Devil sings in our hearts of beyond Eden beautiful things. Our feelings know of desired things beyond our conscious sight. Contentment is a small artificial, illusory ideal. When we shape in our dreams—and our dreams are the forerunners of our acts and thoughts—our deepest feelings, then we picture not a state of contentment, but what contentment we believe will bring us. We do not desire contentment but the fruits of contentment. With our first thought wakes the knowledge of pleasure that is beyond the ideal contentment. And we must overcome our ignorance to gain that pleasure; our feelings must become actions or thoughts. What we do not know is a chain that binds us. And by throwing off that chain, we take all the suffering of a new and vast freedom and the responsibility of that freedom—but we all sooner or later strive to cast off that chain!

IV.

We are all men of faith and men of belief. And the more we are like the animals the first men were, the firmer is our belief and the more ready we are to believe. And the more we are like the gods the last men will be, the less we are controlled by belief and the more we know. Reason tells us that Ignorance is bliss, and that thinking brings sorrow, and we cannot refute Reason. And believers in Reason will make of this sorrow bringing, contentment-destroying thought, a sin, and will refuse to think. But feelings will shape themselves; desires will out. The time comes when the suffering of suppressed

desires overcomes the fear of the Reason-made God and the man thinks. Then, still believing that his thought will bring him sorrow and destroy his contentment, he continues to think. He has a faith that is deeper than belief—a heart wisdom that bases his brain wisdom. He must suffer to enjoy, but he feels that the pleasure he seeks will more than compensate for all the pains he must endure.

V.

At the root of all living things is heart wisdom, instinct. We are all men of faith. And however strong our belief, we are never beyond the temptation of doubting what we believe. The saint must fly from the Devil always, and in the end the Devil always will win. If we are experts and worshippers of art, do we not find ourselves turning from the beautiful picture of a woman to the real beautiful woman? We build vast systems of reasoning, apparently invulnerable and secure from all attacks of thought, and we would live in conformity with reason. But then a little whisper of nature will bring down all our philosophy as a touch will bring down a house of cards. Reason will say that suffering outweighs pleasure, and that death alone will overcome all suffering, and that, therefore, death is to be desired. We will listen to Socrates. We will accept his proofs and believe what he says is true, and still will we live on. Reason proves life to be a bad bargain, but the heart only whispers that we are gainers by living, and that the pleasures of life more than compensate for its pains. And the heart's whisper means a thousand

times more to us than the proofs and the matchless rhetoric of Reason. When at sea the mariner steers by the stars, and when near port by the harbour lights that are only imitations of the stars. And a man lives according to Reason until it sinks, as it were, below the horizon of his consciousness, and then to the last port he is guided by the understanding of his heart. We are willed to live, and whilst so we are willed, we cannot turn upon ourselves and convince ourselves that we would much prefer to die. Brain wisdom is belief in belief, but heart wisdom is the faith that bases all belief and is the wisdom and sight of the God who will use our bodies and limbs for the ends He desires of them, until our brain wisdom becomes as our heart wisdom and man becomes God.

VL

If one believes one must be either incapable of belief-destroying thought, or must refuse to think. To believe thought a sin and therefore refuse to think about thought is the only way to remain steadfast to a current religion. To believe in a religion one must accept without question an artificial, man-made good conscience. One must suppress and strangle one's feelings and desires. But to express and shape in life art form one's feelings and desires is to do but as the birds and flowers and all natural things—is to be natural. Religions are unnatural. They are always misinterpreted philosophies. They are always born of the thoughts of sceptics and men of faith. For the man of faith is the man who does not believe. The man who conforming to his own

pleasure conforms to his God's will, and thinking, and finding the pleasure of thinking, with his thought destroys old beliefs and traditions and becomes the authority for new religions. The good conscience of such a man is his own pleasure. He conforms to Reason only in so far as it will the better enable him to conform to his own pleasure. For that pleasure he will sacrifice many lesser pleasures. He will conform to laws, and stoop often to toil that is repugnant to him. In seeking his greatest pleasure he expresses himself and knows himself and his God, and he does not behold himself in the ideal man of religions, the man all according to those religions should be, nor is his God mirrored in the present or past day, man-qualified God of those religions.

VII.

If we fear, we must possess something we value highly that we might lose. If we fear death, then we must value highly the life that appears so worthless to us. And that fear against all our reason is coloured in all the pains we have known in the Past. It becomes Hell. And thought that will rob us, we believe, of what we possess becomes Sin and the minion of Hell, the Devil. And Circumstance governed by laws all unknown to us, one day vastly increasing in value what we possess, and the next stealing it relentlessly from us by increasing our pain—Circumstance, by all our entreaties and strongest actions unmoved and inexorable in its way going, becomes pictured in the mind in the form of man, as God. And the man who pictures on his mind and

describes his picture is the poet and philosopher. And the believer, the man of limited imagination, will not attempt to clothe in thought what is only suggested by the poet, the allegory, but will accept it as the true and complete thing in itself.

VIII.

Will we ever cease to forget that imagination is contained by, printed only in terms of, reality? We are of the earth earthly. In our dreams we see picture stories told in familiar life-experienced symbols in a language we understand. We cannot conceive of anything more beautiful or more ugly than things we have known in the past. Our beautiful dreams figure for us past joys; our anticipations and pre-figuring of coming woes, our past pains and defeats. Gods, angels, demons, fairies, man-shaped, bird-shaped, bat-shaped, worm-shaped, what does it matter? We know and are familiar with all these shapes. Heaven and Hell we build of earthly materials. The throne of God imitates the most beautiful qualities of all the thrones we have ever seen in this world. God cannot be conceived as anything more than an ideal man. All we imagine but suggests a knowledge of what lies beyond the art of that imagination. It suggests the knowledge of that unconscious memory, and on that knowledge is based our faith. We are all wiser than we know. When we believe, we forget that imagination is contained by reality; forget that between us and the supernatural intervenes nature, and that the supernatural, translated into terms of nature, becomes the

natural; that when God is defined, then and then only shall the defining thing become and know God. We forget and our forgetting is our belief, and in the limitation of the sight of that belief, our end becomes definite, and we move confidently to the attainment of that end. We see not that the end in which we believe is but a beginning, a suggestion of what lies beyond. "One must see to know and be blind to act." We become great and powerful workmen in our blindness. We make religions and laws and conventions. We build cities in imitation of the Heaven that imitates the cities we have actually seen. The poet describes his own desires in pictures of all conquering heroes he would be, and the time comes when people believe the heroes actually existed, and the poet is lost behind the gods he has made.

IX.

And the genius is the one man on earth who, if ever, then rarely forgets. Genius is self-reliance and the genius is the man of faith. He is always a self knower and therefore a knower and valuator of all men. And he only knows because he does not believe. He seeks the poet behind his gods, and in the poems and allegories that become translated into religions, he seeks, what they at first intended to suggest. He has analyzed and tested himself by thought or action. He knows his own weakness, and has educated himself in concealing his weakness behind the weakness of other men. Other men do not know him, and the unknown is ever the feared and respected thing. The unknown can conceal his

motives and make others believe, because of his powers of concealment, that his motives are their ideal motives, until they become tools in the employ of his deeper, always beneath-appearance-concealed, and yet, always all-conquering, true motives. His strength becomes the known weakness of leaders of men. He is irreverent and examines even gods with profane eyes, and robs them of their divine robes. He is self-reliant not as the man of belief because he is blind, but because he sees. But there is a self-confidence that is really self-ignorance and lack of faith, and mere genius aping that often passes for self-reliance and real genius. A man is self-confident often because he believes in the one he follows and is blind to the perils and difficulties that beset his way. But the real self-reliant man sees first of all within himself, and, becoming ever more aware of the weakness of other men as he knows himself, sees in the way great men have gone a way he too might go. And because of his great vanity that is the long-suffering and the great desire to express that suffering, he sets out very fearlessly and confidently, carrying a light that reveals further than the great men have gone before, into the darkness. But the genius ape is blind and sets out as the genius, bold because the genius is bold, but with more noise and greater apparent assurance. And the world waiting ever the coming liberator, the true genius, is ready to hail this play-actor, this make-believe, as the new leader of his kind, for though he be an ass wearing a lion's skin, his bray will not reveal him to those, who have never heard, and, therefore, know not the lion's roar.

X.

The genius is the unbeliever, the sceptic, the man who advances, not attracted by the idols of men of belief, but urged on ever by the suffering, the great longing within him. Reading from all life results and picturing in reason the folly and worthlessness of living, he still advances, more joyfully as the swifter and farther he advances. He sees before him dangers and perils and vast difficulties to be overcome to which all other men are blind. And for the end of his overcoming his reason will picture but empty reward and the blank oblivion that Death is. But still he advances. He feels beyond what he sees. His faith fathoms his reason and belief. He hears the voice of man saying, "Advance no farther!" but he hears also the voice of his heart, the voice of God saying, "Come!"

XI.

And this man of faith leads the world. Not as the world believes, its student, its laborious understanders, its day commanders, the men endowed with "infinite capacity for taking pains." These are but the disciples of the man of faith, and attempt an imitation of him, and end by giving the world a total misunderstanding and limiting and bounding of his boundless object. These are the men who convert philosophies into social systems and poems into religions and seek to make practical use of the far-away results apprehended by the philosophers and poets. They are the bridge builders and foot soldiers, the law makers and law keepers, the practical men of the age. The

Dionysian would forget to-morrow, and the Christian lives but for to-morrow and would forget to-day. And the genius, the man of faith, the true sceptic, who criticizes the belief of the Dionysians, becomes the authority for the Christians.

XII.

Religion is always a misinterpreted philosophy, and philosophy is nearly always a criticism of religion. Religion is an attempt at a short cut from the Present to the End. It would outstride the centuries. It hides as under a veil all that must be overcome, all the nature that intervenes between man and the Supernatural. But philosophy based upon pure faith, and strong and resolute in that faith, looks beneath the veil with unflinching, truth-seeking eyes, and will destroy all truth-covering belief, however comforting and cheering to man that belief may be. It does not apologize, does not applaud itself, does not seek to convince others of itself. It undermines all belief because of the pleasure of the undermining and the faith it has that there is no Hell and no Judge to punish, and that the end it seeks, because it is the greatest pleasure granting end to itself, is the true end, and the end that generations of men will recognize in the ages to come.

XIII.

Belief is based upon appearance, but true faith fathoms all appearances and is that whereof appearance is only the external embodiment. The

man of belief judges by appearance, but the man of faith, the fearless self-questioner and self-knower, with his idea of his own outward appearance and of the worthlessness of it as conveying an idea of what he really is, is ever distrustful of appearance, and is always ready to question and probe beneath it. He is his own standard of measurement. He values men according to his own experience and their worth to him. But the man of belief compares them to his man-made "good conscience," and judges them according to that comparison, and, therefore, very confidently falsely values all men. He will often sacrifice all and even die for his belief, so strong is his belief. But the man of faith does not sacrifice for anything but the pleasure he might gain from the sacrifice. If he sacrifices and dies for his faith he shows, he knows, a lack of faith, a doubting that all will end well, and a belief in his own power to hasten that end. And the man of belief's sacrifices are often made but to overcome his own doubtings, and to convince himself and others of the truth of what he believes. But if the man of faith sacrifices and dies for pleasure, and the highest affirmation of the gaining of pleasure, glory for himself, then he but shows his faith in himself and his God. He never doubts nor questions that God, and is never grateful to Him nor angry with Him. If he prays to Him he but prays for himself and never seeks to influence and guide Him by the way that he believes would bring about the fulfilment of his desires. His conscience is but a calculator of chances and valuer of prospects, and guides and directs him to his own greatest pleasure. For he knows, feels when he is not a thinker, that the

way he desires to go is the way God wills him to go, and that way, he lives and gives all his life power, to go. He serves his God by serving himself and answering his own desires. But the man of belief serves the State and the desires of the State. And he prays to his God for the State and would influence and guide Him and take His work out of His hands. He worships Him and entreats Him to conform to his wishes and his ideas. And he expresses what he believes to be his ideal man, that which he has been told he should be and is not, and wars against his natural desires, and, therefore, shows his distrust of the God who gave him those desires, that he might be as this ideal man. But the man of faith expresses what he is and by expressing himself, sets out with the aid of posterity to find out what the ideal man is, and what every man really desires to be.

XIV.

In our brain-wisdom we are all more or less self-deceivers and self-liars—we all believe. But in our heart-wisdom we never deceive ourselves. At bottom we are all optimists, all men of faith. Some men believe more and are more controlled by their belief than others. And some follow the heart's lead and live according to their unworded and unthought faith in the hidden Beginning and End of things. In mediocre men faith and belief guide and control. Faith urges them towards pleasure, and belief binds them to the conventional way. But with men of great suffering-born enthusiasm it is different. They will war against their own natural desires (and the

more bitterly and fiercely must they war, the greater and stronger those desires will become), or they will war against the age's belief that controls and would say to their pleasure-seeking desires, "Thus far shalt thou go and no farther." And the great believers and men of great faith are the great leaders and makers of history. The men of belief write in the Present-day actions the history of the Past. The men of faith are the historians of the Future.

CHAPTER VIII.

EVIL THINGS AND EVIL MEN.

I.

AN ancient poet sings of a terrible monster that dwelt in the sea and came forth with flaming eyes and smoke-breathing jaws to ravage the country before the fair city of Troy. And every day it demanded one of the fairest daughters of that god-wrought kingdom. And the poet sings how a stranger came to the city's gate and listened to the clamours and wailing of the fearful citizens, and volunteered to go forward and combat the monster. And how with a club no two other men could wield he smote it so that its glistening scales cracked, and its quivering flanks grew heavy and still with weariness, and the fire died in its terrible eyes, and its hot blood ran in smoking rivers back to its fastness the sea. And how when the timid citizens came peeping forth as the stars when storm-clouds are blown away, they saw the great corpse on the pasture that so long had been ravaged, and their hearts went out to the stranger who had rid them of the scourge. And he became a world hero and the subject of a thousand songs, and amongst the men of all time and all nations something to be imitated, emulated, surpassed. The overcomer of the evil thing is the great one, but what of the evil

thing? Had there been no sea monster, no nine mighty labours, what would signify to us the name of Hercules? The deeds of a man make a man's name, and heroes carve theirs everlastingly only on that which mightily resists them.

II.

All men are truth-seekers, and all would shape their own desires and thus define the truth they seek. The man of action pictures his desires in the results of his deeds, and in those results is written the experience history of his life. And the poet would, in words and word harmony, reproduce his life's environment and tell all that has greatly impressed him, express his deepest feelings in the reproduction of that environment. For if he pictures exactly that which impresses him, the feelings awakened in him by the reality should be awakened to the same degree in the watchers of his pictures, by the reproduction of the reality. And the results achieved by the man of action are carved in the resistance he has moved against and overcome. And the men and women and events and places and things described by the poet, are resistances to his desires that flow from him like rays of light and shape on that which resists them. In overcoming the difficulty of reproducing in words what has impressed him, he does what man has never done in the same way before, shapes his desires, expresses himself, and at the same time shows that what has never been done may be done. To express desires as they have never before been expressed, to expand language and promote thus

understanding, is the instinctive end of all things. The great scientist will match himself against all appearance and all substance, and the results he achieves will express the great longing within him. And the thinker will find his resistance in the beliefs and the "good conscience" of the age. He will undermine and overcome such resistance and express himself as grandly as he may on that resistance.

III.

Nature is only art perfected. The perfect work of art would be the reproduction of Nature. If a man could perfectly reproduce himself in art form, he would live for ever. And the life ideal is to gain for mankind the perfect art. We would all overcome death, and the Truth that men seek is the symbol of victory over death. And the faith of man is knowledge that that victory is not beyond the reach of mankind. And all evil things are but as minions of Death, fortresses as it were that loom up and bar the way towards the last victory. They are veils drawn before Truth that must be torn asunder. They are resistances against which the great vain men will match themselves, and by overcoming them express their own desires and the desires of all men. Great discoveries are not made, nor great deeds done, nor great art works produced, with the object of benefiting the human race, but to win honour and glory for the discoverer, or the doer of the great deeds, or for the artist. But humanity always is benefited, and that is the instinctive wisdom of the great vain man.

IV.

What is evil but that which pains me, and the cause, can I conceive it, of that pain? But has not that pain wakened me and brought all that is good forth from me, revealed me to myself that I might enrich life about me by revealing myself? Nothing but pain has wakened me from a sleep that was as Death, and only because of that pain I live and seek the pleasure that will be the overcoming of that pain. And I will applaud others who express like pain to mine and thus show that it can be expressed and overcome. And would I win applause, I must greatly express my own pain, so that others will recognize an expression of the suffering that is theirs. And the great vain men are the greatest sufferers and knowers of the form of their suffering. They will shape the form and cause of their suffering. They will overcome the resistance that oppresses and impresses them. They will carve their deepest, fiercest desires in something that rouses like desires in all men. They will war against the evil things of the world, the minions that guard the long way to the final victory over death.

V.

Wars, plagues, ignorance, storms—all evil things—how gradually, slowly but inexorably, led on by the great vain men, we advance upon and overcome them. For all our fears and beliefs we are men of faith, and the greatest vain men are those who thrust aside fears and distorting beliefs and look with unflinching eyes towards the star of the Future way,

pointed always by our faith. Each great vain man knows his own power, or rather the weakness of that which terrifies and powers mankind, often by mankind's ignorance of it. And he advances fearlessly to the study and understanding and ultimate expression and overcoming of this pain-bringing, fear-paralyzing thing. He paints in imagination pictures, in dreams, himself grandly overcoming this evil thing and winning the applause of the overcoming, and he struggles forward, regardless of pains and lesser joys, to become as his dreams. The man of action will know what men of action have done before him, and know that they were only men. His opponent will never be magnified into a terrible, unconquerable god. In the giant resistance he moves against he will see an appearance only, and will know of the weakness and hollowness behind the appearance. The poet will watch men and women, drawing apart from them, as the scientist watches the atoms and the sun and the distant stars. The latter can admire the beauty and power of the sun as well as anybody, but he does not fit it with divine attributes; he does not bow down and worship it. He knows that without the sun he could not exist, but he knows also that without some beyond-power the sun itself could not exist. He does not fear nor hate nor love it. It is a thing like himself with a destiny, a mapped course to run. Behind it, as behind himself, is God. It is an instrument, as he is, of this God. So he looks fearlessly upon it with his mechanically strengthened eyes and analyzes it, probes into its cause and effect, that from his researches into its construction he might derive new powers for himself,

and be richer in symbols significant of the power that is his own, life-controlling and creating, soul. For the poet, men and women are not the mysterious, idealized, sacred beings that they are for other men. They, for him, are neither good nor bad, for his life view, as the life view always of the great vain man, is far beyond Good and Evil. And as the sun and stars are to the scientist, and men and women to the poet, and the enemies of his nation to the man of action, so are all beliefs and religions and systems of philosophy to the thinker. He does not hate, fear, love, or revere them. They are only symbols for him, resistances against which he will shape his thought.

VI.

If Cassandra could be re-incarnated in the shape of man—if the seer could be born without talent, none on earth would be more unhappy than he. It is sometimes so. Who sees clearly can describe clearly; that is as natural as that water runs down hill and that fruits grow upon trees. But the tools and art materials must be to hand. It is because of the people, who forbear to taste the fruits and do not recognize what they have never tried to see, and what has always been before their eyes, and, therefore, give no heed to the description—it is because of these people that the seer passes from logical language to rhetoric, and ultimately breaks into song. "You who have been to the beyond-the-wilderness-land, make haste and tell us what you have seen." So they cry, who know things only on this side of the wilderness, and not that all the expanse of the

wilderness is no more than the steps of their doors. They who always look up ask what it is like to look down. But let them climb, as the seers have climbed, to the mountain top, and let them look down as the seers have looked down, and then they will understand and appreciate the description. In the meantime, to enter their closed eyes and ears the seer must sing instead of speaking to them. He must rage over the earth, devouring and slaying. He must be an artist, for men will sometimes heed artists when they will not regard men. And the artist has been before this to Heaven and Hell, and on his return has attempted to describe in terms understood by the world what he has seen—and how he has failed! He has seen—what do the people believe he has seen? Gods, angels, demons, devils—abnormal or ideal men!

VII.

From the fool the philosopher learns all that he knows and reveals himself in his learning to himself. The actions of fools speak truly, but the actions of wise men rarely describe with any truth their feelings or thoughts. Nothing is too small or too large to be studied. In the smallest thing, as in the largest thing, is the secret of the universe. We study things but to overcome them by understanding them. The folly of the crowd is the resistance to be studied and overcome by all who would be great men. And to be understood and appreciated and applauded by the whole world of men is the deepest instinctive desire of every man. And because of this world of men the thinker becomes a singer of his thoughts,

the king becomes a conqueror, the engineer becomes an inventor. How wise that world of men is in its ignorance. Men must surpass and overcome such great things to be understood by it!

VIII.

The evil man is not the bad man. Evil men are those who conform to the bad conscience of the age, and to them the "good conscience" is the evil thing. Unbelievers, Free-thinkers, are often good men, though they must be bad Christians and evil men to all true Christians. These evil men are often the strongest men and the greatest fighters against all progress-resisting and retarding, and, therefore, bad things; but bad men are weak and short-sighted even in their strength. A really bad man is a man diseased, an original man, a man born, not as the evil man is, before his time, but after his time. He is a relic of an age that is gone. He does not move with the tide or before the tide, but he is passive or would move against the tide, and must be overcome and borne down by the tide. A bad man is a bad citizen, and a bad citizen is an evil man; but an evil man is not always a bad citizen. And a bad man is not an evil man—but an evil thing. He is a resistance. He is something the overcoming of which will bring glory and honour to the overcomer. He is the cause of all religions and all systems of laws. Hercules to the monster he slew would be the evil man, but the monster itself was the evil thing of all the Trojan world. From the tendencies of things

the evil man reads, and in life, in deeds or thoughts, describes what the god will be. He is the historian of the Future. He is evil in that he sees the good conscience of the Future to be the very antithesis of what it now is. He is thus the evil man, the pain-causing, danger-threatening man of the present "good conscience." To be understood he must be overcome. All he knows must be known and become the property and the power of that which will understand him. In destroying belief and a feeling of security he brings pain and rouses to action those whom he pains. He is the mortal enemy of his own time, the ideal evil, the Devil of his own time, but he is not bad. The real criminal with the added cunning of man acts as the brute he once was. He is unmoral as the evil man is, but he is as the evil man is not, the enemy of the Future-day society as well as that of his own time. He is a time-anchoring, and would-be backward-moving man. He is an offender against the Future, and therefore the greatest of all offenders. He has no religious "good conscience" nor vanity conscience. He is therefore uncontrolled and does not conform to the will of the Future people nor the laws of the Present day. The great vain man must be always the evil man of his age because he is the first to recognize and describe in his life the Future man; and all that is good to-day was mysterious and evil in the Past. But the criminal would bring back to the world of men the rule of the forest and the sea. The great vain man would break up in a way the Present-day social state by introducing into it the Future man, the god man will be; but the criminal would break

up the social state by introducing into it the brute that man once was.

IX.

The evil things of life are the great necessities of life. The pain-giving things are the beauty-shaping things. We desire to absorb and become as that which pains us. Whilst it pains us it is our ideal. We desire thus to become the God who gives all sensation, all pain; we would be all that which impresses us and the pleasure we know is in becoming that God. We would power as we are powered, and always we are being powered. Our discontent is the knowledge we have of the everlasting impressing, onward urging hands upon us. And our discontent will be appeased only by overcoming resistance and powering that resistance as we are powered. We make things express us as we are made to express God. And the things when they in turn express themselves, express us and understand us, as we, in so much as we express our desires, express God and understand God. We seek resistance. We are all more or less curious and adventurous; we all desire to learn. And those things which express what we would express we call the beautiful things, and we would league ourselves with them; we would possess them and become so much stronger aided by their strength. So all things seek to become beautiful to all things, and the one understanding is sought by all. We suddenly, and how we cannot explain, become aware of our own strength. We are strong thinkers, strong runners, strong fighters, and we seek those who are

strong to try our strength with theirs. The stronger they are the stronger we show ourselves to be if we overcome them. They are the particular forms of resistance that we can power as we are powered. If they defeat us or the world believes their strength is more than ours, they impress us, power us, in that they hold what we hunger for, the applause of the world that we seek, and we must follow them. But if we would overcome the pain of that hunger we must overcome them and gain the applause we seek. So our ideal men are usually our mighty opposites. We seek always an antithesis ; seek always resistance to measure our strength by, to carve our names upon. If our ideal men have overcome great things then we must overcome greater things to overcome them. We must overcome the world's heroes by outdoing whatever they did—they the world's great good men, are for would-be heroes, the evil men ; they hold the world's applause that the would-be heroes, would-be new conscience makers, so greedily desire.

X.

And as it is with man so it is with nations of men. The great evil things are the stimulating, man-elevating, and, therefore, never bad things, against the world's progress. Wars and plagues are as fire-breathing, paradise-ravaging, beauty-devouring monsters. But they are living, pain-giving, sloth-disturbing, prize-forming, things. A man acts before he thinks, if he can act, and he only begins to think when acts begin to fail. And every act is in response to pain. We move to overcome pain, and the greater

the pain, whilst we can overcome the pain by movement, the livelier is the movement. But when motion fails thought comes, and thought is the beginning of, perhaps, the last understanding. And wars and plagues and great evils call forth now the thinkers of nations. They cause men to think, and at last the great thinker is evolved. They offer prizes for thought. For the men who overcome the national evils awaits high place and honour and glory. These evils are the monsters that call for the modern Hercules, and philosophers, scientists, inventors, engineers, they answer the call and go forth to the combat, for they know that after-singers will make of them world heroes, and what are hardships, calumny and injustice, that might necessarily be suffered, against the applause of all the world!

XI.

The evil things are those which make in us pain hunger, fierce desire. Do they threaten our best-loved possessions and stir us to rise and protect ourselves and know ourselves; are they the ugly things of life, or do they attract us and power us by their power of attraction; do they hold what we desire, or would they take from us what we desire—what in the end does it matter? They are in all the forms they take, but symbols of the one Will to Express. Beautiful things or ugly things, heroes, lovely women, devils, gods, each thing that we hate and love most, all things that cause us to move, to act, to think, to express, are but God wishes—evil things are but commands of God.

CHAPTER IX.

THE SUPER-MAN.

I.

THE aim of all desire is the super-man. In our dreams we would all depict him, and we all strive to conform as grandly as we may to our dreams. He is the greatest expresser of himself, the greatest world-evil overcomer, the man most greatly understood by all men. He is the greatest world's servant and the greatest world master. He leads the Present on towards the Future, and thus serves the Future. Man with a conscious ideal unknown to the lower animals has also the pains and pleasures attendant on the conforming to that ideal. And these pains and pleasures are far more intense and enduring than purely physical pains and pleasures. And the latter must be subordinated and the gaining of the new mental pains risked for the gaining of the purely mental pleasures. And men will readily do this in the hope of their reward. Victory or defeat often means life or death for the lower animals, but for man it means something more. For will not man often die for the glory to be gained from the dying, and the crown of victory is not always sought by him as a necessity of life. What do the lower animals know of the joy of prize-gaining, of vanity-triumphs,

of great achievement, of great art self-expression? A flower if it was not good to eat was once no more to man than now it is to the lower animals, but now cultivated and developed by him, it is understood by him, it has become a beautiful thing for him. The mental pleasures men know are known also by the god-man will be, the sensual pleasures they know, were known by the animal man once was. The future man will be a pleasure-seeker purely, but the pleasures he seeks will be the higher mental pleasures. He will be a follower of the joy life, but the joys he seeks will not be sensual joys.

II.

And when in our dreams we picture such a man, the hero we would be, we search our own imaginations for forms and colours, and what is chronicled for the memory of nations—histories. But it were well, I think, to beware of histories. If they are more than mere chronicles of events and dates, they become art works, and expressions of the impressions upon the artist's mind of the historical events. They become criticisms, and criticisms are judgments and are never disinterested. We all have our ideal heroes and ideal villains, and when we praise or blame men we but compare them with our ideals. We make them heroes or villains. And the tendency is to idealize them beyond all recognition. A history of a nation becomes then the autobiography of the historian. It is a poem descriptive of his own personal experience. And the Present-day historian becomes, probably, only a little more a true depicter of long-dead men

and long-past events, than Homer, who sang his heroes into demi-gods and his gods into men.

III.

The Past magnifies or belittles and is full of distorting mists. The light of the beginning is behind it and figures move before the light and loom up into the Present as vague gigantic shadows. Our fear of vast things is then apt to make us too reverent and too respectful. If we bow our heads and refuse to study heroes, farther and farther away they will draw from us; and the very object of life is for all men to rise to their level and become in great ways as they were. Past heroes become to Homer Present gods. That they died at a certain time becomes a knowledge that at that time they were fated to die and at all other times were invulnerable. From vast, vague, fear-making shadows, they shape into dream-gods and ultimately marble gods—they cease to be human.

IV.

And will we rob century-old heroes of human qualities too? Will we say they were fearless? But who is brave who does not know fear? Will we say they were all-powerful? But who is strong who has no weakness to conceal and protect? The demi-god invulnerable to the assaults of men is no hero in his conflict with men. We must bring our heroes into the broad light of the sun of our own Present and away from the deceptive moonlight of the Past. We

must value them according to human standards if we are to know them, and they only lived to express themselves in what they did, and to be understood by us. Look upon them, admire them, if we will, but never worship them. For make them divine and we who are but mortal are not of their kind; but make them mortal, human-qualified men, and set what would be our motives to what were their deeds,—then they, men only, have climbed, and we too,—why should we not also climb? We will know that they feared as we fear, were vain as we are vain, loved, hated, were at times nervous, peevish, sentimental, romantic, glory-thirsting, enthusiastic, discontented. They dreamed as we dream, and sought in life to fashion their dreams. These god-like men were watchers and students and in the end knowers of the manlike God. And we the seekers of the super-man of the Future must study and watch with fearless eyes Past heroes. In all men-like gods, we too must see only god-like men.

V.

When a man expresses himself, his conscious object being the applause of those who will understand him, his instinctive object is that he will express those other men who applaud him. He will serve them. And the greatest men express greatly all men and serve all those whom they express. And when over the monuments of great men we are stirred as we are by fine music, we recognize in the monuments, which are symbols of all their deeds, expressed our finest, deepest feelings, our higher

selves. When we bow our heads then and weep and are apparently so reverent, we are not really so humble and awed as we believe. When we applaud our heroes, and at such times in our hearts we do applaud them, we applaud but ourselves, confirm the truth of the dream shapes of our desires, or find in the heroes new shapes for those dreams. For as each written thought is a substantiated feeling, so each hero of ours is a substantiated self. And the monument of a hero that lights all his story—if it does not light too much the story of its builder—all the facts and legends we can remember about him, is but a light that leads us down into and lights up the depths of ourselves. We become the hero. We are stirred and roused to grand dreams. In feelings our hopes grow like ever-forming music shapes and our fears vanish before the martial-like music of our newly arisen hopes. In the story of the hero we behold the form of the hero, and the fascination that holds all our senses to the form, is that not due to a recognition, as it were in a mirror, of ourselves?

VI.

The ideal man of our dreams is never the manlike God whom belief would make our author and father, but the godlike man, the forerunner of the last man, whom we would have to be the child born of our bodies or of our minds. Our super-men are but the figures that on our imagination shape our own desires. Our Beyond-men we must seek for and find but in ourselves. To know the gods one must climb to the mountain-summit home of the gods and gain

the god's-eye view of the world and become in all ways as the gods. And who would know heroes must not look up to, but look with the heroes and know what they know, for only he who knows what they know, knows what they are. He must not study the gods to find himself, but must study himself to find the gods. Self-overcoming is the outgrowing of youth, and the young world must overcome and know itself before it can conceive of future men and picture the world that will be.

VII.

The man of action is in his deeds as the thinker is in his thoughts. They are both philosophers. And youth and philosophic temper are natural antitheses. To depict, in words or actions, future men, ideal men, one must have become a man. And to recognize the depiction one must have the power to recognize oneself, must know oneself. And not to know oneself is to lie to oneself, and the great majority of men are self-liars. To know heroes one must outgrow the lesser passions for sensual joys and the lesser vanities. One must cast away for ever sympathy and gratitude. One must destroy in the fire of self-analysis all the would-be guiding and controlling heart passions. One must be able to say, "Now never more shall I love anything outside myself." One must no longer believe world lies or self-lies and be bound down by such belief. One must no longer see beauty, where according to tradition it should be, but where it really is. That is, one should know one's desires. One must also be strong enough to overcome the feelings

of shame and other false conscience-smitten feelings when one goes to the examination of one's gods. And then, and then only, the old-time god shall become man, and the fear-painted qualities that disguised all the naked brilliance and glory of the man shall be taken away. And blood will once more flow in his before marble-cold veins. And mortal, human qualities will once more return to him, and knowing him as he was, the future men shall stand revealed before those who know.

VIII.

And in him the knowing ones will behold a man who loves, as never mortals have loved, another who is useful to himself, and will die readily for that other, if he sees, and great far-seeing wisdom will he possess, that his dying will benefit his own and the world's ideal. And all the sympathies and all the virtues held aloft by all religions will be in him, come to him naturally evolved by way of his greater ever-forming understanding and brain wisdom, and not by way of his fathers and forefathers, who could not be as wise in brain wisdom as he is. He will be the man of great Reason, the beyond-the-vain man. He will help the weak, not because the weak, as now they do, convince him that he should (for in that case really they are the strong), but because aiding the weak will forward himself and realize the sooner the end for which he and the weak and the strong are. He will be naturally virtuous, because being an egoist he will hold his own ideal the first of all things and yet have the power to recognize that his own ideal is

the ideal of all men, and that the only means of reaching that ideal will be with the aid of all men. Egoism, self-knowing as it becomes, must teach natural, mutual aid, but not the really, forced, artificial, before-its-time mutual aid of the chains of the aboriginal man, religions and laws and all socialistic doctrines.

IX.

And the forerunners of the Future-man are the men of the greatest faith, the greatest vain men. They are the inward burning, the ever-restless, the ever onward-moving ones. For them victory only signifies defeat, and there is no pausing to regard with satisfaction and contentment the way they have come. Do they pause, the heart's applause and the echo of the coming world's applause grows ever more feeble and afar off. They have gained Beauty that was once the object of their quest, and the joy of the discovery has come to them with the gaining; but time dulls its lustre as the air dulls the glint of new-cut brass, and the beauty sought, fades with the gaining. And the fine new thoughts and deeds of yesterday, so ripe and luscious, to-day are as dried fruits and faded flowers. On, on, towards the greater heights and the greater age higher applause! Heart wise they know now that the end of the life of a man is not the end of life, and that deeds are substantiations of life and affecting men in distant ages will live for ever. For great vain men the one glory is greater height conquering, the one defeat satisfaction, the one and only vice contentment. They alone of men, because of their faith, can afford

to laugh at what they believe. If reason will tell them the folly of wisdom-seeking, that victory signifies only defeat, and that life is therefore aimless and worthless, they listen with grave enough faces perhaps and attentive ears; but then will come the re-assuring heart whisper, and again will rise the dream-picture of the joy of the ongoing, and a smile will come to cheer them like sunshine bursting at evening through the grey skies of a rainy day. To live and act and seek glory that they know is the aim of all true wisdom. What is victory, success, but a step gained on a stairway of a myriad steps! What defeat but the contentment with the step gained! There is only one real pleasure, one true pure joy of life, and that is the fighting against odds that seem infinite to gain the step that we have not gained, and in this life probably never shall. For in the joy of fighting we see afar off our children mounting, and though Reason tells us otherwise, in our hearts we all know that the rising of posterity is our only concern, and our one aim is to aid all men in converting mankind into a beyond-our-dreams beautiful and deathless God.

CHAPTER X.

THE MAN OF ACTION.

I.

THE great vain man is the man of vast enthusiasm, the man whose being burns most fiercely with desire for power, for overcoming, for mounting above other men. All this man does, he does but for immediate or ultimate applause. His acts lead towards glory. He is never a conserver of power for the glory-seeking ones who shall come after him, but rather a reaper and user of all conserved power. He is a man of no reverence and, therefore, of an unbounded imagination and a dreamer of grand dreams. His longing is to overcome the applause-gainers, the winners of life, and the time comes when winners, forms in the Great Common Ideal, are the only people who attract and interest him. If he is born to conquer, then the great conquerors of history become the predominating colours in his dreams. Peter the Great's hero was Alexander. As Alexander conquered the known world of his time, so would Peter build up Russia and Russianize all the known world of his. Napoleon built triumphal arches and columns and arenas to himself in

the style of the Roman emperors. Vanity is an instinctive desire to excel what has excelled and to gain the glory of those who have excelled. So the great vain men go the way of those whom the world in the Past has proclaimed great, that the world in the Future or the Present will proclaim them likewise great or greater than the greatest of past men. And though they follow in the footsteps of heroes, never are they hero-worshippers, for they do not follow because of the godlike majesty and strength of their heroes, but because they know how weak and mortal they were. For the great vain man does not look up and lose his way in admiration, but heroes, the greatest of them, are for him only confirmations of the rightful way of his going. He is a self-knower, a knower of his own power, and a depicter in his own dreams of that power. Knowing himself he knows all other men, and all other men, great or small, are only confirmations of his knowledge. He will know, value truly himself, and himself thus known and valued, will be the standard of valuation for the deeds of all men. And all things that other men worship, and that, therefore, power other men, become for him objects of interest to be studied, and imitated, if it is in his power to do so. And he is never awed by the greatness of any act, but only wishes to know the motive, for knowing, feeling when he cannot in thought shape the motive (for he is not always a profound thinker) he will know how the act was performed. Nothing to him is sacred or profane. Into Heaven or Hell he goes and emerges again, laughing. Into the blackest, awfulest darkness, where no man has ever been, he advances,

thrusting before him a great fear-disturbing light. Up to the very mountain-summit dwellings of the gods his fear and awe and reverence-overcoming great vanity-suffering will urge him in quest of the glory that will signify the overcoming of that suffering. And the very gods will bow before him. He has found the secret, the key to their stronghold. He has clipped their wings, stolen their haloes and all other man-given theatrical properties. The great vain man will toil on earth neither for a man master nor a conscience that is man made, but for his ideal that is his supreme love, he will toil as other men know not what toil is. Duty has no power over him, and to him, good advice given by men who have become nothing, is but a warning against becoming as they are. Do that which he does not wish to do, if by so doing he does not see a way to his end in the doing, he will not. One task he feels he was born to do, and, provided the time is ready and the tools and material to hand, he will perform that task as no other man ever could. He works as he plays games, and obstacles that would appal other men become, in the overcoming of them, merely points in the grand game that life for him is. And a few of his kind are chosen as the world's greatest men, whilst the majority become the great life failures and enter the ranks of the beggars, sportsmen, loafers, gamblers, and even the artists. But the success of one such man means the finding of his life way, and all the conserved and heated energy of many generations bursts gleefully forth and rushes, with the impetuosity of air into a vacuum, on to the grand task.

II.

Words but describe motion and thoughts are but feelings expressed in words because they could not be expressed in deeds. No man thinks who can act, and it is only when acts fail that men think. And the man of action shapes his feelings, expresses himself, tells his experience story in deeds as the poet tells his in his description of things that impress him, and the philosopher in his thoughts. Actions appeal to and are understood by all men, so that all men would greatly express themselves in actions and be understood by all men. But when actions fail we think, and we understand those who express themselves and our own feelings in their thought as we understand those who express them in action. And when over the graves of our heroes we become our heroes, we hear them telling us, as do poets and philosophers whom we understand, what we are. "You may be lowly and insignificant," we hear them say, "you may be lonely and unknown; you may be weak in body and limb; have no wit to charm women, nor eyes to command men; but if you dream dreams there is a fire that smoulders deep in you, a fire that will cause you to suffer as we have suffered, that will if the Time be ready wake you to act as we have been awakened, a fire that will never be put out. A puff from the Past, a tale, a melody, a song, and your fire glows and flames up and in the light you behold yourselves. When over our tomb grand sorrow comes to you, you know our feelings, the joy of high self-expression, you understand we great men. You know that we who are dead but lived to serve

you who live, that however lowly you may be, for your applause and approbation, your understanding, all heroes and kings have lived and died gloriously,—you for us were Posterity,—there is a Posterity that waits for you."

III.

All ages have great men, but all great men have not opportunities. The time must be ripe and the place ready. There are always souls that thirst for the glory in life, as the bees seek the honey in flowers. But the same Nature that sows a million seeds that one will find a fertile soil and suitable conditions and flourish and become a tree, is also prodigal of great men. And the many pass without drinking. Man must find an antithesis, a great opposition; for the object of life is a message, a service rendered to Posterity, and on a resistance he would shape his soul, as he carves his name on a rock. But the rock must be found, the tool be near by, and the glory thirst to fashion the dreams that will guide the tool. Without his labours Hercules becomes nothing, and Alexander must have his worlds to conquer. Clive gives full promise of a mighty failure when he finds India ready for his advent; and Washington, because the time is ready, can make American history. Napoleon leaves Corsica, and frets and dreams and prepares until France is stirred and goaded and heated to bursting point by internal fires. Then she is a tremendous tool, a power without direction. So Napoleon begins the shaping of his dreams. The world will be his opposition, his material, and France will be his tool. On the world he will carve his soul

story for the eyes of Posterity; he will give them a great understanding of himself. The army of France becomes his pen and conquered thrones end chapters. His dreams become his star, his star his destiny, and Napoleon's destiny is Nelson's opportunity!

IV.

These are the two dominant personalities of a mighty age, the greatest soldier and the greatest sailor. Napoleon and Nelson are more unlike than like—they are mighty opposites. Napoleon would be the greatest man in the world. Nelson looks to Westminster Abbey and the high company of great Englishmen. Napoleon inspires his troops with belief in himself. The Old Guard shout "Vive l'Empereur!" and will follow him to victory or defeat. To a man they will die at a word from him, laughing at death. He may desert them, but what matter? The Emperor before France. They fear, admire, worship rather than love him. He is a being apart, their ideal personified, he moves a god amongst them. But with Nelson it is always England; and his sailors he inspires with his own confidence in his country and her people. To be a great Englishman were more to him, probably, than to be a hero of all the world. Napoleon very profoundly tells his troops before the battle that the centuries are watching them from the Pyramids. Nelson grandly simple, reminds his sailors that England is watching, "She expects each man will do his duty." Napoleon, a mighty intellect, looks within himself and finds the weakness

of humanity, the man that is in the god, and his knowledge becomes his strength. But Nelson looking within sees but a flaming fire of enthusiasm that burns up each doubting thought. He beholds the god in the man. So Napoleon believes in human weakness, where Nelson is confident in human strength. Napoleon has left remarks and writings that reveal glimpses of a profound philosophy. Nelson's philosophy is as simple as a child's, "Fear God and hate Frenchmen."

V.

If patriotism means pure love for one's country, then neither Napoleon or Nelson are patriots. Nelson died surely for the honour and glory his country would grant him; and for Napoleon Europe was but a vast board on which, in ever-blazing letters, must be set his own name. As Cæsar and Alexander marched into the Future, so would he. As they were always loudly applauded forms in the Great Common Ideal of the world, so were they but heights to be achieved, goals to be surpassed. And Nelson would conform to the Great Common Ideal of England and advance into her history with the greatest of her heroes. Before his last battle, with a presentment of his coming death and great victory, he writes a letter and a simple prayer. He is sure that his death will stir the heart of England and his victory will win for himself great honour and glory. He is humble with the humility of Keats, who knew that his expressed desire to have written on his tomb, that his name was writ in water, would help greatly

to perpetuate that name. Well Nelson knew the ideal of his race, and he would conform to that ideal and stand through ages as that ideal. Napoleon and Nelson are both men of great faith. Approbation is for each the acme of life, and both conform as best they may to the parts that they know will, if successfully performed, win the approbation they so much desire. Nelson's great desire is to meet and defeat Napoleon. He does not believe him, as so many men do, an unconquerable god. However much either of them believes in the Reason-told-of emptiness of honour and glory, neither is controlled or guided by that belief. Napoleon's war genius is his self-knowledge, a brain wisdom. His strength is the known weakness of his adversaries. Nelson's war genius is a heart wisdom, an instinctive knowledge. It is the finely-trained exquisite perception of the athlete who excels at a certain game. But the motive of each is the greatness of desire in each. They are both greatly vain men. They would both greatly express themselves and be understood by men. Napoleon's monument would be all Europe. Everywhere will be everlasting suggestions of his deeds. And his deeds are but as words in the action history of his desires. And his desires, himself, will live in those deeds and pass into an age that now has for us present-day men all the darkness of night. And in the same age Nelson beholds himself, the great Englishman. He knows the poet and poet historians will sing of him and glorify him when his statue has crumbled away and his column become as the dust. Dying, he sees Englishmen of this day pausing in a busy life before his monument, reflecting

and dreaming and fighting over again his battles, becoming himself, understanding him: and what is happiness but the knowledge that one has made the deeps of him, the very soul of him known to his own kind!

CHAPTER XI.

THE MAN OF THOUGHT.

I.

THINKERS are always poor bridge-builders and road-makers. Their sight is too keen. They behold afar off, the end of things, and describe what they see. But they are not blind enough to be deceived as to the distance or the obstacles to be overcome. They picture Heaven but foresee the fall of the Babylon towers, and go to the building without any enthusiasm for their task; and they cannot compete with the short-sighted architect or the still more short-sighted bricklayer. Other men may turn their hands to many tasks and succeed in many tasks, but the thinker is a poet or a philosopher or a failure in life. On the other hand, the blind enthusiasts, the philanthropes, the business men, have no idea of distance or perspective. They build their towers to reach the Heavens that the thinker has perceived and described. And from the ruins of their fallen structures they learn how to build cities and bridges and ships. From the ruins of their beliefs they will in time rise to be philosophers. Philosophy describes the history of motion, the only indefinable thing; and all motion is destructive, and therefore all philosophy must be destructive. Motion does not create—all must have been created before motion—but it destroys

to reveal. It destroys the last creation to show the next, and then it will destroy the next. God is beyond, and before God are all things, and to reach God all things must be destroyed and absorbed. All progress is destructive. And true philosophies are not formulas to which life should be suited; they are formulas to which life will and must suit itself. And only believers and misreaders of philosophy will ever seek to live according to philosophy. Philosophers suggest, if they do not tell, what will be, but they do not tell, as religion does, that what will be, may be, long before its natural time has arrived. The thinker finds an ideal at the end of life, mutual understanding and equality of all men. He writes of great humility and self-sacrifice, an ideal painted of far-off results of present-day living. But he does not cry, "Liberty, equality, and fraternity!" and rush into revolt against the powers that be. But his disciples bring back to the end of his own life and would realize, his far-away dreams. They make religions and preach socialism and quote the thinker as their authority and the first giver of their dogmatic doctrines. But the true, born thinker is no teacher and never a practical man. He does not conform to his philosophy but to the conventions of his time. He is often a model citizen, and was a model citizen ever a man of strong and prominent personality? And in after-times, what he did and did not do, will be of little use to men who would know what he was.

II.

The life of a thinker can never be truly told in a history of his actions or a record of his spoken or

written opinions. The actions of a profound thinker belie his thoughts, for the more one thinks the more control the brain gains over the lesser passions and the less the heart is worn on the sleeve. And the deeper are one's thought searchings, the more unstable become one's opinions. The man of fixed opinions is the man of prominent personality, and this the thinker, the watcher of life, can never be. As the old-time demi-gods became men shaped to communicate with men, so the thinker must level himself with all that he desires to know. If he is of strong personality he will be one man to all men, and to know men he must be many men to many men. He must bear himself to fit temperaments. He must search for the ideals of men and adapt himself to those ideals. All the world side of him will be a conforming side, a player's part, and all his actions will be motived by superficial feelings, and not by the profound emotions that form his impulse, his will to live.

III.

All great art is unmoral, is beyond good and evil. We can all say what we like and what we dislike, and we only live to do this. But we cannot say what is good or what is bad. We will express our feelings, but we must not pass judgment on that which expresses them. And the great artist describes truly what he sees and feels. He is no self-appointed judge and teller of what should be. With the calm, far-off disinterestedness with which the astronomer studies the stars, so the thinker will study himself and all men and all things. His soul will be like

a mirror—a clear, still surface, unruffled by loves or hates or little vanity passions, and he will be a life-long watcher of the mirror that reflects all things, and a describer in words of what he sees. He is a soul watcher, and thought is soul sight and life is the view encompassed by that sight. It gives a record of experiences—and opinions toss upon experience like corks upon sea waves. Opinions are judgments. And the thinker is a watcher and describer, but not a judge. He is a man without conscience, and conscience is necessary if one would know what good and bad is. Judgment, the thinker places in the Before or the Beyond, in Eternity. And he proceeds to paint his life history, himself, in the colours of experience, never in actions or expressed opinions, and always without love and without hate. It is not the sun-worshipper who finds the true part the sun plays in the solar system, nor those who see gods in the stars who find their chemical constituents. And it is not the man who loves or hates who knows and can truly describe the object of his passion.

IV.

Experience is sensation, and we only know what we feel. All things are meaningless that are beyond the reach of our senses, that do not touch us. The most perfect language is nothing to us if it does not shape our own experience. All art forms are moulds into which, provided we have it, we pour the experience-made stuff of our beings. We must feel to believe. Opinions must be based upon feelings that are not defined in thought. Thought mines ever at

the foundations of opinions and shapes itself in the substance of that which it destroys. It reveals the weakness of the foundations of opinions, voids in the structure where the all-sustaining truth is not. And still to believe, veils of illusion must be drawn before the thought sight. If we are to have emphatic opinions we must not think, and not to think is to believe in what is not true. We must lie to ourselves and believe our own lies. And the great thinker cannot believe his own lies, and it is only in this that he differs from other men. Other men look without and take the world's view of themselves, and their biographies might be written in their actions and opinions; but the thinker looks within and takes his own view of the world, and his life-experience story will be told only in his description of that view.

V.

The man of thought knows so well the manner in which his ideas grew and formed and came to him, that never will he seek to convert other men to his way of thinking. He is not a teacher nor a preacher. He was not taught himself by other men, nor did the preaching of other men ever convince him. His deepest thoughts are his own transformed and at last expressed sufferings, his own personal experiences. And if he shapes them in art works to satisfy himself they must be true. Other men can criticize his art, but his experience expressed is beyond their criticism. He is privileged alone of all men to lie to all men as he will, but on condition that never must he lie to himself. By being true to himself he has thrown off

the fear conscience that once commanded "Thou shalt not lie!" And his expressed thoughts, his art work, is part of himself, as another man's child is part of the man, or as the perfume of a flower is part of the flower. He will not die that men will believe what he says is true, because he knows that it is true, and the belief or disbelief of other men will not affect its truth in any way. When men know—not believe—what is true, they will know and understand him. He will therefore never argue nor sacrifice to impress other men with the truth of what he writes. He will only describe himself as he is, not what according to the age's ideal he should be, and in time he knows men will rise capable of finding themselves in his description. And his brain will gradually as it were draw more and more apart to watch the heart's way and the way of the lesser self. The artist's description of the man will reveal to all those who know themselves, the artist.

VI.

The thinker rarely advises, rarely sympathizes, is rarely sincere in the company of his fellow-men. He becomes an instrument of Beyond-men. Nothing to him is sacred or profane. God, the devil, the highest man, the lowest man, the worm, the fly, the flower, the atom are only for him objects to be studied and seen into. He has but one passion that absorbs all lesser passions—to unearth and reveal truth. He is impersonal and disinterested. He observes himself and his worst enemy and his dearest friend, as if all were distant stars. His controlling

and guiding and art-giving force, his directing conscience, is his higher vanity. He is of necessity discontented and a great sufferer, and therefore a dream-builder and dream-pursuer. And it is just because his dreams keep beyond him and his actions fail him, that he thinks. He becomes an examiner of cause and effect of failure. In his dreams he beholds himself a leader of life, and a comparison of his dreams with reality becomes the object of his thought. He expresses himself in words, and ever as he expresses himself the desire to more and better express himself grows. Thought intoxication comes to him, and all pleasures, all pains, all sensations, all motives, all results, are elevated, lowered, levelled in the one all-absorbing, insatiable flame of thought. He begins to think when his dreams draw away from his tiring actions. He begins with little doubtings and a slow forming of small, circumscribed ideas, but soon, and ever more rapidly, like forming clouds, the ideas expand. Like circles in the sea they grow ever more vast until they fade in their very vastness and roll like exhausted waves on the shores that limit all conception. Then for the thinker comes the hour of greatest peril. Then if he forgets, and loses the will not to think, in the sea whence he searches he might stay too long in the depths, and start to rise again too late and never come up. Never must leave him his vanity and his future picturing, deceptive dreams. Would he win glory and he only lives to win glory, he must cease thinking and begin the describing in art form of all the truth he has found. Philanthropy and worldly benefiting are not the reasons of his thought. Other men and women

he sees are but as himself, instruments serving a purpose, and the end of the purpose is the end of all, not the end of life of a few generations of men. He only thinks, as other great men express themselves in actions, to win the world's applause, for in the world's applause instinctively he knows is the world's instinctive understanding, and when all men understand all men, then he knows, perhaps, also only instinctively, the purpose will be achieved.

VII.

And for the world's applause, what does the thinker consider too much to pay? Will he not, vain man and good opinion lover as he is, pass from society into loneliness, which passing is the greatest of all suffering? Will he not toil and struggle on with inexorable patience towards the end of his labours, the glory which he alone sees, and which other men would have him believe does not exist? A light lover, a born dominator and sunshine dancer, he crawls, boring for long, long years in the greatest darkness that in the end the light will break in and the world behold all the work he has done. Bore he will into the boundary wall of the world ideal and return, being a vain man, to tell, nay often in his grandest suffering-made enthusiasm, to sing, of the wonder of his discoveries. And then, probably, very gradually, will he win the ears of the world, and his apes and imitators will appear to lead the world; and very timidly, very suspiciously, but ever more confidently, and, as in his darkness days the thinker knew it would and was always cheered by his know-

ledge, the world will follow on towards the end and confirm the results of his labours and discoveries. Give him food, clothes, light and a few admirers, and with his dreams before him, life becomes for the thinker but a grand long game. He has at will admittance to the Beyond-land where all other men are stopped by the Cerberus conscience and fear. He will come to earth as it were and compete with lesser men in their own calling, but this is his only amusement and relaxation from higher things. He lives always alone in a cave whose walls are mankind. A man among men probably altogether unknown and adjudged one of weak and uninteresting personality. Unloved and alone probably, also, he will pass through life as a disguised, outcast god amongst the mortals, and his great privacy will be as the mountain-top home whence the gods could repair at their will. He is a searcher of the hearts of men, but only the after-generations who know their own hearts will gain admittance to his ; and then they will know of the angel their forefathers harboured, and the thinker's so well foreseen age will come, but only when he is long dead.

CHAPTER XII.

THE POET.

I.

To George Henry Lewes, Goethe and Shakespeare both belonged to the objective class of intellect. They were both realists, both truth seekers. "Goethe's constant striving," he writes, "was to study Nature so as to see her directly, and not through the mists of fancy or through the distortions of prejudice,—to look at men and into them,—to apprehend things as they were." "Hence we see why he was led to portray men and women instead of demi-gods and angels; no Posas and Theklas, but Egmonts and Clarchens. Hence also his portraitures carry their moral with them, in them, but have no moral superposed,—no accompanying verdict as from an outside judge." And again he writes, "Shakespeare too was content to let pictures of life carry their own moral with them. He uttered no moral verdict, he was no Chorus preaching on the text of what was pictured. Hence we cannot gather from his works his own opinions." But in the works of Goethe, Lewes reads the autobiography of Goethe. He understands him when he writes, that all his works are part of his grand confession of life.

II.

The brain of Shakespeare could trace the way of its coming to its throne. It could regard the conflicts of the past with the same disinterestedness that age has for its youth. It could behold all its one-time battling for supremacy with the heart that clung to its loves and hates and traditions and conventions, and, hampered by these, desired to rule, and shape in art form, without the bias of fancy or prejudice, all the phases of that conflict. It could analyze all the heart's relations with men and women and inanimate things and circumstances surrounding and affecting it. The brain would be a thing almost apart from the man who played the life part in conformity with the convention of his times. It would watch the actions motived by small vanities and egotism and passions that shaped the external man, the man men saw and thought they knew. And the art of the man drew the brain view. It expressed the intense interest, the vanity joy, the impulse to create that formed the higher man. It would draw Shakespeare's own self and his dearest friend and his worst enemy with a pen, that never for a moment idealized, never added one touch of sympathy pleading. It would judge, so was it emancipated from the heart, those who gave the heart its sweetest joys and those who caused it bitterest pain with the impartial judgment of an ideal man, a god. It would draw no real heroes or villains because heroes and villains are idealizations. They are men glorified or belittled by passions or traditions. They are over-conformists or non-conformists. The men and women it drew were

but men and women who moved by in the life of Shakespeare and were events set in the environment of that life.

III.

Shakespeare does not say whether the world is beautiful or ugly. To one character it is beautiful, to another ugly. He will not say whether things are good or bad. "There is never good nor bad but thinking makes it so." He never draws a moral. He has no ideal good men and his bad men you often love. He never says, "This character I admire, this I detest." His sympathies never deflect Fate. The world of men, the moralists, the historians, the hero-worshippers, put on their spectacles of books and begin their search for Shakespeare in his works. They look for the morals of him who is too broad-minded to be moral. For the opinions of him who thinks too profoundly to have opinions. They look for the acts of him who acted but in conformity with social convention. They look for him as they look for themselves, through the eyes of their brothers and forefathers rather than through their own eyes. They look for a glorified self and they do not know their own selves. All that surrounds life, that is in contact with the senses, mirrors life; and these men who do not know their own shadows, how can they find Shakespeare who saw himself as it is given to few men to see themselves and described what he saw? Diamonds would be only sparkling glasses for these poor lapidaries. What tests can they apply in their researches? They who cannot value themselves, how can they value any man? They seek in histories, in

opinions of other men, in libraries, for a traditional Shakespeare, the Shakespeare who should be, but they never once glance into the hiding-place of the real Shakespeare, their own souls. Then after a time they reach the conclusion that Shakespeare is not to be found in his works.

IV.

There is a sorrow deeper than tears, and a happiness beyond laughter. And in such sorrow and such happiness are the extreme pains and pleasures of mental feeling. We must have all suffered greatly to know great pleasure. And if our greatest suffering can be recalled to us, and also the overcoming of that suffering, then we see expressed an experience that we would express. A great enthusiasm wakes and surges then within us. We recognize, as in a mirror, ourselves. We gain, we instinctively know, a proof that we can express ourselves, as we would express ourselves; for do we not see that others have done what we would do? High hope awakens once again. Our heroes are only ideal selves expressed and proofs that we may be what we would be. We must be made to feel pain to know the joy of overcoming the pain. The sweetest music is always the saddest. And the great artists are always the hope-bringers, the optimists. They depict always their greatest suffering, that in the very depiction we might behold the pleasure, born of the overcoming of the suffering, and know that the greatest suffering can be thus overcome. We are all heroes, for we all recognize ourselves in our heroes. And the grand sorrow that comes to us when we listen to the telling

of a grand tale,—the pleasant sadness of sweet music,—is that not recognition of the richest emotion within us? And who can picture the heroic most greatly, will find most swift recognition and appreciation from all of us. And what the men of action describe in deeds, the grand artists do in colours or words. All great men are great truth-seekers, and in the grand sorrow we know before the graves of our heroes, or in a fine story, or a song, or a poem, or in the richest music, we each of us recognize what is true, and know the truth of the expression of the great artist. And in Trafalgar Square we will find greatly expressed, Nelson; and in all corners of Europe, Napoleon; and in the works of Shakespeare, Shakespeare; and in the works of Victor Hugo we will find Victor Hugo.

V.

Victor Hugo stands to Shakespeare in much the same relation as Nelson does to Napoleon. Heart man to brain man, romancist to realist. Shakespeare's characters are never real heroes or utter villains, and Victor Hugo never draws any men who are not heroes or villains. He describes always an Olympic world peopled by colossal figures, vast shadows of men. As music is made of an arrangement of contrasting sound, so are his books made up of contrasting events. He plays upon the gamut of humanity. He ranges from the beastlike of the lowest in man to the god-like of the highest. He uses ideal weakness to contrast with ideal strength and

power. What is beautiful and ugly meet in a paragraph. He makes a butterfly to alight ever so daintily on a blood-stained barricade of revolutionary Paris.

VI.

The perfect history of any individual man would be an exact reproduction of his own life. And that life is expressed for the man in his sense of perception of all things, in his outlook upon life. If he can give a perfect reproduction in art or action of that outlook, he can perfectly express himself. And this is the ideal of all art. Shakespeare the realist in quest of that ideal will, by expressing a myriad of details, seek to build up a great art reproduction of his outlook upon life. In his works he will write his autobiography. And we, reading the works, will in an imperfect way, for if art were perfect it would be nature, move through the life of Shakespeare, play as it were at being Shakespeare. We will watch the world as he watched it, and see what he saw and feel as he felt. We will notice storms, landscapes, seascapes, moonlight nights, winter days, spring days, gardens, forests, flowers, birds, beasts, reptiles. We will meet men and women he met. We will move in a world he knew. We will watch his outlook of life and be impressed as he was, if we understand him, and thus know him. And he is as a painter where Victor Hugo is as a musician. In words and word-harmony he will describe people and events and experiences so that all the descriptions blending and joining will give a realist picture of his own

environment: and on a man's life environment is mirrored all his life.

VII.

And of the life environment Victor Hugo will give an impressionist picture. He will neglect entirely details and what is mediocre. He will not draw truly men and women and events and places like Shakespeare, but will seek to bring out in relief dominating and impressive traits. Like Michael Angelo, he will enormify all his events and men. He will describe in these enormified things the grand sorrow, the deep-heroic, the great longing within him. He will contrast men and events and rouse men as they are roused by martial music. From imagination that passes beyond reality he will return bringing of the sorrow beneath tears and the happiness beyond laughter. He will reproduce his grand dreams. He will describe the god that is in the man, where Shakespeare will describe the man that is in the god. And reading in the works of both artists men will find in themselves the god of Victor Hugo, and in their ideal selves, their dream selves, always the man of Shakespeare. Victor Hugo describes the grandest, most heroic feeling he has ever known, and we recognize in the description our own grandest feeling. And Shakespeare will tell what he is, and we will all know we are as he is. Basing all our beliefs and all our reason-mapped way of life, and our dream-drawn fruits of the end of life, is a vast faith and certain hope knowledge of what shall be. We are all heroic. Inexorably we advance to the

conquest of Death. We are each one of us his certain prey, and ever waiting for us is his terrible, insatiable maw. But we advance fearlessly and with god-like patience. We are born to live and die, but as we live we overcome ever the minions of death, and slowly, surely, we advance on that which we overcome. The scientists and thinkers will map out our way, and the artists will confirm our faith and cheer us on. We are members of the Deathless army. Myriads of us will sink to rise no more,—but what of that! With our little shields before us and our puny swords in our hands we march upon the awful, colossal, all-devouring figure that awaits us. The conflict is super-homeric. The grandest world artists, shaping their grandest feelings of joy and pleasure, can only describe in a little way the ardour, the heroic life enthusiasm that flames in each one of us as we advance!

VIII.

In our relation to one another we are like flowers that grow on a bush. Down in the root of the bush is the meeting-place of souls, the common soul of all. And down towards the root we must struggle and worm our way to bring to the surface, to our bloom shapes, to our art of life the matter of common understanding. We would each of us express all that is in the root, each one of us be as God. And we must look within to see without. We must know ourselves before we can know and understand others, and understand that all the ends of men are but contained in the one end. And who would know Shakespeare

must voyage with him all the way on his towards-the-soul journey, must know himself as well as Shakespeare knew himself. Emerson says very wisely that "the man who understands Shakespeare is as wise as Shakespeare"; and a man must bring his own wisdom, his experience and not book-founded wisdom, to the reading of the works. He must be as broad-minded, and must have all the high disinterestedness of that broad-mindedness to know the real Shakespeare and recognize him in his works. He must have experienced all that is expressed in the works. When he has filled the word-shapes with experiences of his own, then will he know Shakespeare. But his own brain must have fought for its freedom from the control of the lesser passions and vanities, and risen at last victorious, to survey the world of life from the conquered heights, the same "beyond good and evil" vantage-point whence life is viewed by the brain of Shakespeare. For to know Shakespeare one must have the same life-view as Shakespeare, and know the effects of that life-view. But with Victor Hugo it is different. Where Shakespeare takes the god's-eye view and looks down upon the world of men, Victor Hugo describes the man's-eye view of the gods. Shakespeare would only have been interested in the man in Victor Hugo, but Victor Hugo would be concerned only with the god in Shakespeare. And it is easier to look up to the heights than to climb the heights and look down. To know Shakespeare and Napoleon we must climb and know the vast suffering that urged them to the climbing, and also the pleasure that was the overcoming of the suffering. And

Victor Hugo and Nelson so much nearer to us will sing the pleasures known of the gods, of the supermen Shakespeare and Napoleon are. They will rouse each of us to a knowledge of our heroism and might, and urge us on in the pursuit of those who seemed at one time such impassable worlds away from us.

CHAPTER XIII.

A GREAT VAIN MAN.

L

IF we study a hundred different portraits of one man, in the collection we will find many that hardly seem to portray the same man. And if a literary artist draws a hundred psychological characters, each one of these, however much it might differ to the external view from the others, in proportion to the truth with which it is drawn, must be a more or less perfect portrait of the machinery, the inmost motive power, that stirs the artist to actual, visible existence. Turgenieff's advice to young authors was "to depict with truth, with remorseless truth, their own sensations." And all great literary artists, in all great psychological characters they draw, must do this. We cannot feel other men's pains and pleasures, and the best descriptions of them will but recall similar pains and pleasures we have known. And when other men describe their emotions a comparison with our own will, alone for us, give their descriptions the impress of truth. If we describe the state of other men's minds we but guess or deduce. We describe what we cannot see or feel. Ours is a blind man's painting of Truth.

II.

Hamlet and Macbeth must be pictured phases of Shakespeare's inmost, impression-taking being. They are characters formed from identical substances, moulded to differing shapes by the pressure of outward circumstances, and the resistance they move against. All their deeds, their successes and failures, make up two masks that cover the one personality. The pains and joys and fears and hopes of these two characters are all Shakespeare's. Macbeth is often looked upon as the antithesis of Hamlet, but Macbeth is Shakespeare as Hamlet is Shakespeare.

III.

In the highest form of human life is the most powerful, the most restless vitality, the greatest desiring, the greatest suffering. Mental pains, so much more intense than physical pains, are unknown by the lower animals. But then for them are no vanity triumphs, and the mental joys are unknown. As the animal develops, the senses develop also, and far more sensitive, far more susceptible to pain, to outward impressions, the animal becomes. It fears more and hopes more. Its life widens. It enters further into the Past and further into the Future. It suffers more; but then suffering but signifies the birth of new capacity for pleasure and more intense, more fierce, becomes the longing for the greater pleasures that are now in new feelings, for the first time, perceived. Then far more powerful and imperative becomes the Will to Express. As the steam

in a cylinder struggles to escape and in the struggle transforms itself into the motion of the engine, so the ever impression-heated vital energy in the higher man struggles and surges within him and becomes the great discontent, the great desire to write itself in motion, action, thought, where and how and as greatly as it may. But what if there is no outlet for all this ever-increasing energy? if the tool is not to hand, nor the material to be carved to the shape of the desire? Can the higher man then adapt himself to circumstances and accept existing conditions, become as the lower man? Can he adopt the methods of the lower man, and smother his desires, still his greatest passions, quench his enthusiasm, blind himself to the level of their blindness, compete with them successfully in their own little short-seeing ways? Can he become contented, happy as they pass to be and so often believe they are? It is easier to overcome little desires than great desires. If we desire greatly, then great is the hope-drawn picture of the pleasure of receiving that which we desire, and great also is the fear-drawn picture of failure. But if we desire little we neither hope much nor fear much. The higher man's intense suffering, his ever-increasing desire for expression prohibits for him for ever the contentment so easily attained and so greatly valued by lesser men, who do not desire as he does. These lesser men have felt so much pain, and the pleasure that means the overcoming of that pain is, they believe, however little they may value it, the highest form of pleasure, the only happiness. But the higher men who have suffered so much more, know of pleasure beyond the finest dreams of the lesser men, and the

greater is the desire in them to live, the finer picture Hope draws of what may be. The higher men are the most optimistic men, and for all their suffering, the happiest of men, the greatest Truth seekers; but they cannot force themselves to believe what is seen by the eyes is the end of all. They cannot lie to themselves, cannot so successfully ape lesser men as to believe they are lesser men. If it were so there would be no tragedies of Hamlet and Macbeth, there would be no world artist Shakespeare.

IV.

Reason, brain wisdom, is very gradually in man taking over the controlling, directing power of instinct, of heart wisdom. What was instinct becomes intelligence, and, with the rise of intelligence also rises the new responsibility of self-government. The great longing to express is still within, more fierce and active than ever, and must be out; but no longer must be the blind, hunger-directed onward-surging, outward-flowing. The brain-wise man looks now whither he goes and sees the obstacles before him, and knows what he must overcome. He sees before and beyond the event. He is like an engine liberated from the controlling hand and left to direct itself and govern itself and its future in a new, strange freedom. And he pauses baffled and bewildered as one who emerges from a dark room into a flood of light. The solitude about him is too vast, the powers to be overcome, now they are seen, too enormous. The man has suddenly realized a dream of all his ancestors. He has suddenly become a god with all the re-

sponsibility and loneliness and far-seeing of a god and the limbs and body of a man. He has suddenly spread before him the god's-eye view of the world, and he speaks only the language of men. With preparation we can look upon the sun, but who looks suddenly upon the sun is in danger of becoming blind. The brain-follower realizes for the first time his own experiences. They rise like forms new and ripe to be expressed, but the tools and materials, where are they? If all men were like him then all could understand him, and he could express what he so clearly sees. But men do not understand the language of the gods, and how can gods' secrets be told in the language of men? He is heavy and big with ideas, but like a modern male Cassandra, his ideas are beyond his words and none will listen when he speaks. Knowing so much and so fiercely burning with desire to tell so much, he is less than all little secret explaining men. Though his wisdom cries out in the street, it is as if he were mute. He would describe what he sees but what other people have never seen. And his description must be in terms of things they have seen. His images before them will be grotesque and unbeautiful. He is like a man in words trying to describe an elephant to those who have never seen an elephant. It is thus dragons and vampires are born. And it is from the applause of men, not of the gods, that his life-pleasures must come. He has wings as the angels, and about him is a chain that holds him to earth. He implores, suffers, acts, sings, threatens. He will be a king or a beggar so that men will listen to him. He will ape the deeds of all men who are applauded by men, for those deeds

are, he knows, words in a language men understand. But he fails; and his great sadness, his great longing, becomes at last thoughts. His words flow fiercely, rapturously forth and become naturally rhythmic and musical, and he bursts into song. His desires flow smoothly at last and shape as they would be shaped. And Hamlet and Macbeth at last become Shakespeare; the would-be man of action finds at last the consolation of song. And all the suffering that was in the two characters, that urged them on to their actions and motived both their tragic ends, and that ultimately shaped them both in art form, was not that the great vanity? And the greatest of all poets, was he not one of the vainest of all men?

V.

Hamlet personifies the wakening, the eye-opening, the quickening, wondering, astonishing, intense surprise of Reason. His ancestors and his younger self have lived with the mind's eye closed. Gradually within them has been evolving this mind's eye, the new sense; and now in Hamlet suddenly it is opened to look upon all things. He has believed, as he has been taught, that all things are of certain shapes; has never dreamed that they could be otherwise, and now the first glance of this new sense reveals how otherwise all these shapes are. He expected to see something, and pictured in his imagination the form of that something. And then he sees what differs vastly from what he had expected to see. In spite of his senses, then, he

refuses to believe in what he sees. He seeks truth and has a school-made idea of what truth should be like when found,—and he finds truth! He searches the motives of virtue, and the astounding discovery comes to him that no man is virtuous. Probably abnormally sensitive, he becomes self-analytical and self-critical. And one who seeks within himself, what must he always find? Behind all, self-deceit and delusion. All is show. Self-interest bases all and vanity motives all. But love of others, self-sacrifice, charity, generosity, those qualities that should motive the action of men,—where are they? Hamlet becomes disappointed, disgusted with himself, suspicious of himself and all men. He becomes a sceptic and questions his own doubting and all men and all appearance, even God. He becomes a cynic. He has lost belief in his kind and has not found faith in himself. He, the idealist with man as his ideal, becomes aware of the real man. With bitter cynicism he plays with Polonius, Osric, his old once loved schoolfellows, Rosencrantz and Guildenstern—they are confirmations, he bitterly, sadly finds of the truth of his doubts. He loves Ophelia and his mother, but they are frail beings, and must be doubted and mistrusted even as he doubts and mistrusts himself. Laertes' grief over his sister's grave becomes for Hamlet another show, a mocking make-play of grief. In those who should be the best of their kind he finds only, often suspicion-magnified insincerity, falseness, weakness, deceit. All he finds wrong with the world of men, and he curses Fate that he should ever have been born to make the discovery.

VI.

In Hamlet the brain is struggling for its own. His great suffering is the birth-throes of a higher reason. Hamlet is the forerunner of the brain man, and like all forerunners, a greatly lonely man. To a certain extent his brain is free, but its freedom is as that of the bird that has been born in a cage and is now liberated to fly whither it will. Facing it for the first time is the responsibility of its own life-keeping. It must feed itself and fight its own battles; it has entered suddenly an entirely new world. Hamlet has become the god with, still clogging all his way, the attributes of the man. He looks before and after as other men do not. Everywhere he sees perils and pitfalls that other men cannot see. Every end so joyfully and confidently sought and hoped for by them is for him, beyond-looking them, but a new beginning. The idols they blindly worship, to his keen sight, become cracked and hollow and all unbeautiful and false. These other men are guided by delusion, but for him who pierces and probes behind delusion, what will be his guide? He can dream. In imagination he can picture the event and himself the hero of the event; but then thinking too precisely will crowd his picture with ever new images and details. He pictures the way to the event and the way beyond. And art at best is but impressionist. If a picture were perfect it would be indistinguishable from Nature. Hamlet would have his picture perfect. He is so ambitious that there is but one rival artist worthy of being equalled, and that is God. He would, because other men in the same

circumstances would, revenge his father. But for other men the deed would be the by all and end all, but for him it is not. He could close himself in a nutshell, but his dreams would still make him a king of infinite space. The small to his imagination is as the great. There is no end. The way of life is too short and too slow. The uses of the world are flat, stale, and unprofitable. He becomes aware of the vastness of the smallest things, and his mortal being shrinks before all that vastness. Killing the king, he is affecting distant centuries and is doing even then nothing. Alexander and Cæsar become dust, and the king of men passes through the bowels of the beggar. He is vastly sensitive, greatly vain. He surges with desire to act, to carve himself a great monument, but the monument of his imagination is beyond the work of one man's hands. He is so ambitious that he cannot express himself as he would, and to express himself as he can and as other men do, is not sufficient to gain any applause from that which urges on his ambition.

VII.

Behold him then as the world sees him,—actionless, apathetic, idle, wanton,—it believes him mad. And he affects an antic disposition to humour its belief, so cynical is he of its belief. And as he knows himself,—a mass of quivering energy, a delicate, fragile, sharp instrument, a straining, heaving, directionless force. He would be so much,—he is what? He is disgusted with humanity, and yet is he not less than that with which he is disgusted! Each member of it

can do more than he can do. He is less than the player who works himself into a genuine passion, playing a part; less than Laertes; less than Fontibras; less than the common soldiers "making mouths at the invisible event." Thought has conceived for him an ideal world with which he compares the real, and finds what the real lacks! Thought shows him the lowliness of man, but also how that all that he does is for that man. He becomes aware that he is the slave of the master whom he so much despises. It is too much. He refuses to believe what he knows and he cannot really disbelieve. His heart's desire is to win man's applause and his reason shows him the worthlessness of that applause, and reason for the time rules. He becomes careless and cynical of the opinions of men and loses his motive power for life. He is without a conscience. Only in moments when temper reigns and passion falls like a flame from heaven does the heart control. He calls himself because of this a passion's slave. He knows then that his god-like worshipped reason is overcome. He only moves motivated by passion and in passion he sees an attribute of the lower animals. With all his god-like reason he is less than a man.

VIII.

Macbeth is for many critics simply personified ambition and the antithesis of Hamlet; the man of action as opposed to the man of thought. But Macbeth is only another phase of the great vain man. For Hamlet the individual represents the mass, but Macbeth sees in the mass the individual.

Hamlet in his imagination compares mankind with his ideal man and would have all men be as his ideal. Macbeth compares himself with the ideals of all men and would be as all those ideals. And all men never can be as Hamlet's ideal, nor could Macbeth ever be as the ideal of each man. Tragic ends to the way of both these characters are certain,—they must both be failures in life.

IX.

Macbeth has no religious conscience. He thinks without fear of the hereafter, of Hell, of eternal punishment after death. In the end, with death before him he does not repent of his deeds and asks forgiveness neither of God nor man. But guiding and controlling him is a vanity conscience, a great fear conscience of the bad opinions of men. The bad opinion of God he does not fear, but, hidden always, under it does not matter what form of sin, must be that which will win for him the bad opinion of men. The fear of being found out, of having his weakness revealed is the only fear. And on his imagination as lantern pictures on a screen, will be fear pictures, ghosts, enormified and horrible visions of failure before men: and it is this conscience that makes him—as the religious fear-conscience makes martyrs and saints—strong and heroic. In Hamlet reason warred incessantly with every instinct. In Macbeth fear of gaining the bad opinions, warred just as incessantly with the hope of gaining the good. And the striven-for end of the warring in each case was,—what was to be the dominating life-motiving

power? Both Hamlet and Macbeth were greatly imaginative men, great mind artists. In Hamlet the heart desired and reason pictured too exactly the way between the desire and its achievement. In Macbeth, hope pictured himself the ideal applause-winner of all sorts of men; but fear pictured, again too precisely, the way to and beyond the winning.

X.

Macbeth was too artificial to live. In seeking to conform to good and evade always bad opinions of men, he was for ever playing a new part. He desired greatly golden opinions from all sorts of men. He would win the applause of the people by being King of Scotland. He would hold the good opinions of Duncan whom he must murder to become king. "What he wouldst highly, that would he also holily," as Lady Macbeth says of him :

"Thou'dst have great Glamis that which cries,
Thus thou must do, if thou have it ;
And that which rather thou dost fear to do,
Than wishest should be undone."

Hamlet, on the other hand, was too real. He neither desired the good opinions nor feared the bad opinions of any man. His reason in making him despise men robbed him of a motive to life. He would follow always reason and not conform to the world's conditions and be any man's ideal. He would refuse to play a part to win any man's good opinions because reason had shown him the worthlessness of that opinion. Reason had robbed him of

belief and would hide from him faith. Macbeth would be guided too scrupulously by the heart ; he was too much under the control of his fear ; and Hamlet too scrupulously by the brain ; he was too servile before Reason.

XI.

Hamlet and Macbeth are both lacking in the faith that makes men truly great. They can neither of them live beyond their imaginations. Hamlet looking forward and Macbeth looking back upon the event, each sees a beginning in what for other men would be the end. In a way they are not antitheses. Macbeth can no more make mouths at the invisible event than can Hamlet. He is just as irresolute. He is always "letting I would not wait upon I would." To be or not to be is the question always before him. He failed because he was not born for the task he did, just as Hamlet failed because he was not born for the task he did not do. Macbeth's weakness was that he feared too much his vanity conscience and valued too highly the good opinions of all men. Hamlet's weakness was that he despised too much those opinions and had no conscience at all.

XII.

Hamlet tells Horatio of his greatest weakness—that he is a passion's slave. Not a whit does he care if the world thinks him mad. He looks down upon the opinions of men as Macbeth looks up to them. For from all men, friends or foes, Macbeth would, at

whatever the cost, conceal his weakness. And he becomes the very slave of one who suspects and can play upon that weakness. Lady Macbeth taunts him. She is his Delilah. To appear strong before her he will conceal under a deed of her devising the weakness that she suspects. He is like the high-minded schoolboy whom his companions, greedy for the fruit, dare to rob an orchard. His very desire of their applause and fear of their bad opinions makes him heroic before them. With his finer imagination he pictures perils and obstacles to be overcome to which they are blind. But he becomes, because of his vanity, cunning and powerful in the overcoming of these obstacles and the evasion of the perils. When the apples are stolen, and for the mere sweetness of their taste, to appease a sensual appetite, never would he have braved the disgrace of capture, a far more terrible thing to him than the wrath of the capturer or the physical pain he is like to inflict, and when others have already forgotten, he will have not. Still will be with him the fear of being found out, and all his fear-coloured imagination picture of that finding out. To gain the greatly desired good opinions of some, he must risk losing the also greatly desired good opinions of others. To be the ideal of two men of opposite ideals becomes the impossible task. The vanity conscience is great and terrible. All applause given by it must be greatly paid for. Macbeth has murdered the king, but the deed returns to plague the inventor. His fears become nightmares and ghosts; his suspicions, magnified by those fears, convert innocent words and actions of men about him. They become accus-

ing fingers that point him out. For the murder he neither praises nor blames himself, but he fears the finding out and the slipping away of the good opinions he has won. He has entered the sea of deceit, of weakness concealing, and on he wades until the waters, ever rising, close over him and he rises a swimmer baffled and beaten by the waves and the winds of circumstance. He has taken to himself the robes of kinghood, purple and gold and jewelled, and a crown that scorches his brow. He has lost confidence in his play-acting. He has sinned against his vanity conscience, and his imagination shows himself exaggerated in his grossness, believing through such eyes the world of men watch him and the way he came to the throne. And men must die at each hint they give that they begin to see the way of it all. Death and the hereafter, the strongest of men or beasts, that which in mortal shape will make the bravest tremble, will be welcomed by him. But the fear that men shall know he is not what he appears; that they will find him weak where they believed him strong; a villain where they believed him an ideal man! At whatever cost, the cloak of appearance must be kept about him, and what he is must be concealed. His fear but makes him brave and more powerful, more terrible. His men desert him; his queen dies; the very woods advance against him. On the sea of deceit he has entered so far now that to turn back were as futile as to advance, but advance he must. He bravely, desperately swims. There is no sign of weakness; no repentance. He has lived for his ideal and failed in his endeavour to express that ideal. The night falls, the waves rise

higher, the storm becomes more fierce, the end only more certain. It was to be! Man and Fate and Death,—let them all come! When the life is plucked from the heart, then and only then goes the beyond-fear-seeing Hope, the faith that is in all men. In Hamlet at the end, instinct commands and takes the life-controlling reins from the irresolute, faltering hands of reason. And in Macbeth at the end Hope thrust aside the fear that has driven all through life, and lashes on the steeds of life, fearlessly, valiantly, joyously at last, towards the silent ranks of the army of waiting, inexorable Death.

XIII.

An apple-tree cannot of its own will produce pears. Great artists would express themselves in an art "alien to their nature." They are greatly vain, and their progress towards applause is necessarily laborious, and for them all too slow. They hear that so greatly desired applause given to other men, and in their dreams they become as those other men. Raphael wrote his "Century of Sonnets," and Dante "fain would paint a picture." Wolfe would rather be the author of Gray's "Elegy" than take Quebec. Cæsar believed it "a nobler thing to remove the barriers of the intellectual life than to extend the boundaries of Empire." Napoleon, it seems, envied a little, Goethe. Shakespeare desired "this man's art and that man's scope." But it cannot be. Shakespeare, knowing himself so much greater than other men, fails where these other men so easily succeed. He sees where they are blind. His faith, flowering

in knowledge, is not so strong as their ignorance-based belief and confidence. He is not sincere enough in their parts. As Hamlet he fails; as Macbeth he fails. And the suffering of their failure will bring him to his own. He becomes the great calm, mountain-haunting, time-striding, down-looking, god-like being who watches and studies life. He describes all he sees, himself and all men, disinterested as he describes, as the scientists who write of atoms and stars. And with the describing, all the one-time suffering turns into life pleasure. He has found a language "fit and fair and simple and sufficient." He flows from himself into the expression of himself, and Macbeth and Hamlet are but phases of that expression. Hamlet's self-knowledge is now wedded to Macbeth's fear-conscience. Hamlet's pent-up energy flows forth, conforming to Macbeth's desire for the good opinions of men. There is motive now and direction. It is the advent of a great vain man.

CHAPTER XIV.

THE POSTERITY BOOK.

I.

POSTERITY says, "What is this of a jealous God, a loving, hating, wrathful, altogether human-qualified God? There is but one God. My God is your God, and until you become me, I am the representative of that God, for none other can you serve but me. I am not jealous, not loving, hating, wrathful, not human-qualified in any way. Does it matter to me if you worship Bacchus or would live as Christ? Fetiches are your Gods only, shaped to stars and suns I thrust through the gloom for your guidance towards me. My Christ, my Buddha, my Bacchus; you following them the interpreters of my call, but advance towards me. Do you fight or pray, laugh or weep, build or destroy, whilst you seek your pleasure, and nothing else ever do you seek, you seek me; and all the joy of life that comes to you is the knowledge your heart gains that you move towards and serve me; I who am your will, your pleasure, your motive to life: though you serve many masters seeking but your own pleasure in the serving, you serve only me."

II.

In the Posterity book are strange virtues. There is curiosity, the desire to know others that in the end

others will know you; and discontent, the king of all virtues, the maker of passions and enthusiasms and all that which goes towards the creating of greater selves and greater future men; and vanity, the minion of discontent and the life motive that foreruns the coming time of pure reason, when the brain shall know all that the heart knows and all feelings shall be thoughts. And idleness!—"When am I idle," writes the author of the book, "when I am sitting or walking, when I am levelling myself with the lowest companions or drawing down the mouths of the mighty to my ears? Am I idle because people see no results of my labours, and because I sit at times dreaming and steeping myself in a pleasant sort of forgetfulness? I who am always gathering impressions, always experiencing, as assiduously working as the bees that store the flower-given honey in their bags and hives? From all beautiful and ugly things I gather my store of knowledge. I experience and seek in opposites the shapes of my experience and then, becoming as the results of these opposites, I express myself. The flower forms and beautifies in the bud, and the budding days are only preparatory for the blossoming that is to be. And in my idle days I but prepare also for my blooming. When my thoughts ripen within me they will burst forth and appear in the shapes of all weaker things they overcome without me, the once strong things that have warred and formed a balance of power that now is sensitive to my movement, that is weaker than I am. I seek this weakness of things, and in appearance, in art terms, in forms of things I overcome, I build a mould into which my ripened feelings will

flow and form when the day of my expression is come to me. For my thoughts swim like vast, vague, shadowy, shapeless monsters in a vaster, deeper sea. And until I have stored my memory with shapes, until the high is there, and the dark, and the deep, and the bright, and the stillness, and the sound, my thoughts, my experiences, must swim on, sink and rise, soundless, nameless, fear and hope shapes only. I am never idle. The vague idea of a year ago, suddenly I find on a certain morning is definite and clear and beautiful and opens to my mind's sight perfect as a flower is. I am like fruit that the sun ripens. I sit and wait. I cannot paint my surface the colour of ripeness and have also my pith, my substance, mellow and sweet."

III.

And Intolerance!—That also I find one of the lesser virtues. "Waking minds," says the author, "call for tolerance. No man, they say, can be truly great and tolerant, but are they not wrong in this? Art is the outcome of extraordinary enthusiasm, and enthusiasm is always born of great admiration or great scorn. We cannot enthuse about that which we do really love or hate. We posterity-men are beyond your love and hate, but only to love and hate more than you do. One who loves, hates also, and we love not our fellow-men, but what we all will be, and all of that which is in ourselves. We must have some cause to espouse; there must be something that rouses the fighting spirit within us, something that opposes and shapes our ideal of life, some re-

sistance to be overcome. Right or wrong, we must believe a thing before we can be powerfully moved and influenced by it. We must desire it or be desired and threatened by it. We men of faith must believe to act, and man's power is based upon this weakness of belief. We must not listen to pleadings or reasoning of that which we set out to overcome, or it will overcome us. There must be dreams we have not fathomed and laid bare and robbed of their deceitful beauty, the darkness that is undisturbed by our thought and is never made light. This is always the world-contacting part of the Heaven-born one, the divine weakness, the Achilles heel that chains the god to the earth and the world of men. It is the mortal part that feels for him all his so necessary pains and sufferings, and grants him all his pleasure of vanity and self-pity and passions that are less to him than that of his vanity. Man knows not that he is bound until he feels the chains about him, and, if he is born with the chains on, it is difficult for him to realize that they might ever be off. One who listens to the heart's voice cannot listen to the voices of all men—and men rise on the men they defeat. Intolerance is belief that is essential to all art, and it alone will make possible a horizon to expression, a limitation, a form that art might take. A man's ideal is usually the antithesis of himself, and the man he desires most to overcome and surmount; and if he admires such a man he does not passionately love him for the man's self but for himself. We must not be tolerant, must not love our masters. Those who are greater than we are, must stir within us not love, but desire to be greater than they are, if ever we are

to become great. We must be intolerant to become strong. Only intolerant men can be enthusiastic and unscrupulous, and only unscrupulous men can be great men."

IV.

"What is gratitude?" he writes. "One man is grateful to me for a gift I have bestowed upon him; but I gave the gift for my own pleasure, and was his pleasure of receiving greater than mine in giving, and why should he be grateful to me? And I who think thus, can I ever be grateful for anything that is ever given to me? We searchers of motives destroy our own virtues. If people give to us, we are probably stronger than they, and if they would win our pleasure, we must hold something that they desire, and we must hold power over them: and if they give because we are less than they, they give that others, perhaps their God, will be pleased and applaud their generosity. The self-interest is behind the gift in whatever form the gift may take and however deeply buried the self-interest may be. We have no right to applaud ourselves when we give, unless we see our own gain by the giving and acknowledge that gain; and if we seek the motives behind a gift we need not be grateful, and if we are, then we sell our birthright, and cease to be free."

V.

The writer of the *Posterity* book also issues a caution against the solitude, the cave-dwelling so

highly appraised by thinkers and philosophers. "Habit," he writes, "is second nature, and there comes a time when men fall in love with their own virtues and become their own ideal men. And there comes even to the thinker an hour when he believes at last, that never will he be a social star nor great in anything but his thoughts, and he becomes resigned, which means convinced of the truth of the self-lie that all the lonely days he has been telling himself. He believes at last he loves his solitude, his mountain-top, above-the-world dwelling; but there are really none on earth who love real solitude less than he. His is a forced solitude, a forced life-long prison-house. He is the forerunner and leader, and therefore lonely one, for there can be but one winner to every race. Who can picture hunger better than the man who starves? and who the pleasures of company better than he who passes a life of solitude? And who is more active to gain food than the starving man? and who desires more to become of the many, than he who, until his habit becomes natural to him, must live alone? So the thinker thinks, because in his dreams he beholds himself great amongst the many, and his thought he knows is his power and the way to the fulfilment of his dreams. The flower does not bloom without purpose and the mightiest man has his little vanities, and little passions, and his food is the food of other men. Beware then, and question well the motive of the thinker who says he loves his solitude, for as well might the starving man say, "Oh, I love to starve!" Yet the deepest thinker, the greatest truth-seeker, as other men, often requires the warming, comfort-giving

fire of the self-lie when there comes to him his wintry nights."

VI.

Also he has a chapter concerning the Ego-reading. It is addressed to Present-day men. "There is one book," he writes, "that contains the wisdom of all books, and that is the Ego-book, the book of self. Men worship pictures and have no eye for Nature. They read life-stories of others, and their own lives are closed books to them. But the few readers of the Ego-book,—who but themselves know what interesting, pleasurable lives they lead? How splendidly happy they may become? The pages in the book are the present days, and who knows what day begins the new chapter? Shall it be a gloomy or a sunshiny chapter? A chapter of tragedy or comedy? There is always for the reader the eager interest, the healthy expectancy of new page-turning, of working up to the new results. The characters,—the hero is the reader and the others are real people who come into contact with his real life. The incidents,—were ever incidents in other men's lives so near to him? Be Egoists, self-readers, turning ever with increasing interest the day pages of your lives. The Past has gone—do not then regret the Past. The Future will be what it will be. The Past you have read, the Future you are to read—all is written unalterably, both Past and Future. Let the brain be the mind's eye and nothing more. Let it watch always and all things—but let it not judge the seen things, nor regret nor fear, nor hope, but trust ever to the instinct, the heart's knowledge of the why and the wherefore

of things and of life's destination ; and remember that the heart alone communes with us after-men. And then if the heart be free from the brain bonds, from conventions and convention-made little vanities, free from definite philosophies and fear-inspired and art-formed religions, it will neither fear nor regret. Let the brain be the artist of life with its subject ever the desire of the heart. It will touch then only the Present Moment, which is the only living moment, touch it with so full and rich a light that by contrast the Past and Future must become dark. And with a darkened over Past and Future, think how one may dare ! And who dares lives. Let the weak man see the daring wisdom, let the bonds be removed and the must-be-believed-in idea, and how strong in new joy-seeking life he will become ! The daring, adventuring, joy-seeking ones are always the careless-of-the-Past-and-Future, the voluptuous, convention-free, and also, "good conscienceless" ones. The men who do not fear to admit their self-love stronger than all other love, and themselves the most interesting of all things to themselves. The men who will not lie to themselves ; the real egoists who alone possess quality of truly great ones. They alone know the greatest suffering and the greatest joy. They are the life-wine drinkers, the evil-doers. And evil,—what is evil but bond-breaking ? and when you have tugged and twisted and filed for a life-time with all the apparently infinite patience that faith in the end of a work gives one, and flung at last the severed bond from you, and have answered the heart's cry at last, the cry for freedom and evil-doing that is within you, then who on earth has drunken deeper of life-pleasure

than you have? Who knows more what happiness is? and who will be less contented than you are? Who will sigh with your feeling for the severing of new-found larger and stronger bonds? Who set again to the fighting with grander hope and higher courage and finer real joy? You have tasted the reward of the going on, and never again will you be contented, and yet always will you be with a strange, high happiness of hope about you. You will have found the worth of living. Never again will your ideals be shattered, for they will be beyond the reach of those who would shatter them. You drink of life and some will applaud you and many revile, but the applause will outweigh the reviling, with the knowledge your heart has of what the applause signifies; and you will drink on. Then centuries hence we after-men will welcome and love you, and perhaps your heart knows this, for all the evil you have done the good we always forget. The good but conserve the power we hunger for, and you evil ones give us that conserved power. Read on and know yourselves. And then you, seeking and finding your happiness in the reading, will listen to all advice of other men and take none, for you will know that only in the seeking is real happiness to be found, and one does not seek when the way is mapped out and there are everywhere finger-posts and directions. Whilst you read, like an explorer in a new land, you will be nerved up to expectancy; you will be always curious, always enthusiastic, always magnificently interested. You will recognize that life is a play-actor's part, an aping of other men's ideals to power other men by your aping; and you will wear your

mask boldly and never forget that conscience is man-made and that would you be as your gods, your gods are without shame. We after-men smile at the "good conscience" of your time as men of your time smile at the Hell of a few centuries before. When you become wise enough to see behind the "good conscience," there is no further need for it to control you, and be you then before the world ever so evil, when you become vain, and only vain men become evil men, your vanity will keep you to the wishes and will of the leaders of men, and you will not destroy society as the good conscience upholders and keepers would have you and all men believe."

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VII.

And this:—"Men who do not know themselves are always led by those who do. The self-knowers are always the first searchers, the first form-discoverers. They are always the happiest of men, for all their clouded brows and laughterless lips. The silent, joyful heart-cry of discovery,—who but they will know that?—but that is their secret, and the secret of their unspoken happiness that shines so like a glamour about all the work they do. Never do such men deceive themselves as to the motives of their acts. Never do they reproach or apologize for themselves; but impersonally they watch and study themselves as they watch and study all men, and use themselves as standards of valuation for all men and all the gods. Men who do not know themselves set before themselves false selves and value others according to that standard, and become unhappy because they cannot

raise themselves to their own ideals, and a comparison with their ideals always brings reproach and shame to themselves. The self-knower unfolds himself before the world, and in time the world will behold itself in him. But the man of belief holds up not himself, but a picture of what he believes he should be, and invites the world of men to become the picture, to behold in the picture its future self. And then comes the watching world's struggle. The world, prone to believe and follow, believes the picture held up by the man of belief is the true picture of itself, is even convinced by the man's burning rhetoric that it is so;—but if it begins to shape what it feels, and knows itself, it beholds in the work of the self-knower, what is more than a picture, a reflection. Then begins the age of metaphysics and scepticism, the doubting age, the beginning of the scientific age, the first sign of decay in the age that was. 'Know thyself,' said the first of philosophers, and 'Know thyself,' say we after-men, perhaps the last philosophers."

VIII.

He writes also of this age:—"A great age, a practical and scientific age, an age of cold reason, a religionless, and, according to quick-dying belief, an artless age; and yet we doubt if ever before there was a more emotional age. Homes and home lives are ringed round by ever-weakening convention. Art, the old-time believed beautiful and convention-termed beautiful, but now known to be laborious art, must keep without. Less artistic, cry the believing ones, the now dying ones men become—and yet do they

feel less, are they less beautiful? Think what men will think, a great age. The heart fires the brain and the brain runs riot like a young horse newly liberated in a green pasture. Higher passions come to control. Deeper emotions awaken. Better understanding will come with the birth of a freedom granted to new art forms. Sympathies and clogging fears will go, and love of self will bring to life a sincerer, deeper love of all things. And the cold, unscrupulous, never tiring lords and leaders of the age are the forerunners of ourselves, also in their lives our prophets and foretellers. But oh! what storms, what blasting and forging there must be! The fires are lit, the men stand at the stithies, the bellows breathe inwardly; now again after nearly two thousand years begins the converting of men into gods!"

CHAPTER XV.

THE MODERN EDEN.

I.

"IT seems to me," said the philosopher, "that if the Devil is the antithesis of the Christian 'good conscience,' then this same 'good conscience' should become the Devil of those who are, or who become, unchristian. But is it so? This 'good conscience' would seem as it were to throw over for ever those whose God becomes antithetical to it, and it certainly seems to be that it never tempts those self-converted ones to its ideal 'goodness,' with half the power and persistence that the Devil exercises, when he plays his old part of the Paradise serpent and tempts to evil the best and strongest of the good Christians. 'Thou shalt not doubt!' commands Christianity, and it follows that to become unchristian one must think and become in sort a philosopher; and if to become unchristian means to listen to, and in the end recognize in the thought expressed in the Devil's whispers, one's own, at-last-shaped, deepest feelings, then all true philosophers must be anti-Christian, and, perhaps, even the Christian Devil will be formed in qualities of their God. And what after all is the Christian Devil? If I would become unchristian, it

is my heart would have me so. It is my heart that would have me unlearn all that I have been taught, would have me break up old traditions, and question, and by questioning, overcome old beliefs. It is the desires of my heart that would have me be otherwise than what the commands of my forefathers and, perhaps, this is the same thing, my 'good conscience' would have me be. Could anything tempt me to any course if I did not desire that thing? It is my heart that is my tempter and my 'bad conscience,' and if I am a Christian, it is my own heart that is the so much anathematized Christian Devil. And if I call liar that Devil, then I but deny the desires of my heart and rebel against Nature and the Supreme Will to Express that controls all Nature, and through Nature makes manifest itself. My heart's desires,—what can they be but the desires of my God? And I would employ my controlled will against the will that controls it! The Devil is the sceptic and poet and philosopher that by religion is, or would be, imprisoned in all men. As a man desires so he doubts. And all the harmony form, the beauty about his life art work, is the expression of his unworded doubting. And when his desires become so great and fierce as to burn up the constraining prison-house of religion about them, when they rush forth with tremendous, so-long-pent-up, and now newly liberated enthusiasm, to form and express in art forms that are not limited to designs that conform to good and evil, then the man becomes the perfect sceptic and perfect poet in one, the perfect philosopher—probably, also, the perfect personification of the Christian Devil."

II.

"The ideal of Christianity as the ideal of all religions is contentment. The Garden of Eden whence man was cast forth and the Heaven man seeks, are but ideal lands of perfect contentment. But both as the Beginning and the End they are to the heart man non-satisfying and artificial. The contentment that coloured the dreams of his boyhood,—what is that to him if he has gained it now? When I find my through-life-sought thing,—when the reward of all my life's toiling comes to me,—how much do I value it? What is it to me? The man-described perfection, the tomb of all feeling, the Paradise contentment is not all. What I desire and have all along desired I now know is not contentment but the fruits of contentment. Adam is in me and Eve and the Devil, and the world is my Eden. The Devil will colour in all beautiful forms I have ever known, my beyond-contentment-soaring dreams; and the Eve in me shall desire fiercely the fulfilment of those dreams; and the Adam must bestir himself from his little granted part-playing, his little eating and drinking and existing satisfaction; he must think and shape in thought his desires and taste the forbidden fruits and leave the garden. He must leave for ever the Christian 'good conscience' and the Christian God."

III.

"Was I ever a Christian? If so, an introspective examination will show me now but one remaining Christian virtue. In a disinterested way I am neither

honest, modest, generous, patient, humble, nor reverent. Perhaps at times I affect these virtues and reveal to myself by so doing another Christian vice, deceit. My conscience is my vanity, my desire for the good opinion of other people, and all the real shame and self-reproach I know, comes to me, when seeking the good opinions of these people, I find the bad and am found out. My lesser desires that would war with laws and be hurtful to men, the still remaining beast in me, are well controlled, not by a Christian 'good conscience,' but by my greater desires that would have me conform to the good opinions of people and gain the applause of that conforming. In that I seek truly to express my desires, liar and deceiver of men though I be, I am a truth-seeker, and did I hide myself from myself, as I do from other people, and deny my desires, so would I hide the truth I seek. Beside the Christian ideal I am an evil man. Devilless I am, 'good conscienceless,' practically unmoral and unvirtuous, and yet I deceive men and serve myself but in the end to serve all men, and my ideal is Truth. Would those Christians observe me, I would appear before them an anomaly, for all about my Christian failings is my one remaining Christian virtue,—I am still sincere."

IV.

"When I was young," continued the philosopher, "I believed the old story of the Garden and its tragedy; believed in the Devil and Adam and Eve and the Forbidden Tree; believed that all beautiful things were within the Garden, and that all ugly and

pain-causing things were with the Devil beyond the walls. And my own heart's whispers that called me so to the Book called ugly things,—did I not know in them the honey-tongued voice that had tempted Eve and brought about the degradation of all my kind? 'Deceiver' then I called my heart, but why? why? why? would whisper my heart to me. And it drew before me the beautiful things that the Book called ugly things, as the Devil drew them before Eve. And I feared and hid myself from the beautiful things and convinced myself that I was a lover of ugly things, because of my fear. But my heart's voice would not be stilled even by fear; and there came a day when I cried defiantly, 'I doubt'; and I waited then the consequence of my cry. And the Devil, the pleasure of evil-doing, of knowing, of expressing, of art-shaping my so long unshaped feelings, was there smiling radiantly to comfort me; but where was the punishment of my 'good conscience,' of the God who had commanded, 'Thou shalt not doubt!' And the Devil,—did I not find how the Christians, my teachers, had maligned and false-painted him? and I said, 'Those who are truthless here will they be truthful in all other things; those who lie so about the Devil, how do I know that they do not lie also about God?' "

v.

"And my 'good conscience.'—When one questions the evil of the Devil, then one questions also one's 'good conscience.' And mine,—that one time so

brave and confident and certain and unforgiving 'good conscience,'—did it not flee before my thoughts as a show-making army when its weakness and hollowness has at last been betrayed? My 'good conscience,' that as it were, mud-bedaubing beautiful things, would convince me that ugly things were beautiful things, and that all real beautiful things were but robes and masks of sin and vice. And hounded on by fear of the punishment of non-conforming to that 'good conscience,' did I not become strong in my warring with all beautiful things? But in the end did not my hope-based weakness overcome my fear-motivated strength? And that is the end for all men, be it to-day or to-morrow or at the end of many centuries of long years. If the Devil is the heart wisdom of man, in the End the Devil must win; for the heart wisdom of man is the brain wisdom of God; and reason that is so much boasted of by man, does it not grow and become itself from the heart? One must become 'evil' to know what 'good' is, and one must follow the Devil to find God; and one must go forth from the garden of contentment and build in dreams in the wilderness, again the old garden, and strive and fight on ever to fulfil and substantiate one's dreams, to know the fruits and the pleasant perfumed shades and all the beautiful things, and what in the end the garden means. And we, Eve-like, un-Adam-like men, who are always dissatisfied and discontented, ambitious and glory-seeking men, dreamers, who refuse to toil for a daily wage and a man-written-book imposed duty,—do we not because of ourselves become the lonely ones and the garden outcasts, but

in the end do we ever reach our end, for all men, the beautifiers and glorifiers of the garden? "

VI.

" We are the evil ones, and probably, did we know it, the Christian Devil is our God. He the perfect philosopher is our prototype, and we live but to imitate him as the Christians seek to imitate their Christ. For because of his discontent and the spirit of revolt in him, he too like we are, was cast forth from the garden to lonely desert wandering, and we, like he was, are only breakers down of old ideals, of Eden walls, and callers forth of men into the world of life. For we have painted in our dreams beautiful, beyond-Eden things; we have dared to think, and so far in the wilderness of the beyond-contentment have we wandered, that at last we have found a beauty and a social ideal beyond the end that was at first apparently fruitless wandering and social destruction. And now be we poets or philosophers or men of action, we make of life a language wherein we express what we have found, and confirm by our expression the calling forth voices that are heard everlastingly by those warrers with discontent, the ever-slowly being overcome inhabitants of the garden. We are the singers of the new conscience, and therefore the enemies of all adherers to the old. Like the Devil, who when he entered the garden ventured much, so do we, for our friends are like all of them to leave us. To win good opinions of people, we risk gaining the bad opinions of others. We are darers and adventurers. We are

what Adam was not and what Eve would be, livers of life. Very often must we assume serpent-like disguises to appear beautiful to the people, as the people understand beauty, and to hide ourselves from the people's would-be wrath. And all men who are greatly vain are as we are, Devil's disciples, evil ones,—but then only you who are also greatly vain will know how vain we are."

VII.

"In us too, did you know us, you would find much of the anti-Christian, Satyr spirit, much of the old world wandering gods. In our hearts as we obey our masters will be the smile of the Satyr—our own inward laughter will wall us from all outward grief—our own pleasure will be behind all the work we do. Could you steal behind and look within us without our knowing, how surprised you would be! What matter the garments or features we wear! We are often nothing more than drinkers, beggars, gamblers, players, time slayers. We can afford to bow very low before men, because of our pride. In your inward looking you would behold us, not weeping but laughing, not sad but strangely happy, with a happiness perhaps a little beyond your dreams. We have become unchristian and given over for ever the shady, cavern-like, 'good conscience' haunted lives of the good people, and we now bask or dance shamelessly in the warm, bright sunshine, where no religious fears are to cast shadows, and little sorrows are supped up by our dreams and our vanity triumphs as the sun sups up the dew. Many men pity us, and many men—and this for the greatest of us is the saving,

suffering-soothing clause—neglect us, and we,—cannot we afford to be amused at the pity of others and be glad of the temporary hiding-place and training-ground given for our use by other people's neglect of us? We are answering the voices of our desires, of our hearts, that when we were Adam-like men in the Garden in turns would sing passionately and pray weepingly to us. We are probably of all men the greatest sufferers and of all men certainly the most evil, but then probably also, we are by far the happiest of men."

VIII.

"And the antithesis of we Devil's disciples, the men of firm belief, the unquestioning men, the true Adam-like men,—is not the world peopled 'very densely with their kind? They are the modern average men. We men of faith are great in the end or we are nothing, but men of belief can be in the end but men of belief. Their goal is success and respectability and good citizenship. They are benevolent, philanthropic, church-going, duty-doing, convention-carved and motivated, machine-like-good men. Their ideal is not their own ideal but the ideal of their fathers and forefathers. Because of these ancestors' commands they must not lie to all men, but in believing and smothering in belief their desires they lie greatly to themselves. In the shade of the Forbidden Tree they recline contented. 'The fruits we are forbidden to eat and we do not desire to eat of the fruits.' So they lie to themselves and believe their own lies. They would command the Future as the Past commands them. Posterity,—they will not

serve Posterity, but shape the course for Posterity to take. They will make themselves the gods of Posterity and Posterity they will not have be their God. We are their leaders. It was our ancestors who gave them all their religion and systems of laws. We are the only idealists, and we build our ideals on those which we destroy. Yet we, because we are not like the Adam-like men, are the benighted ones and the enemies of all the world's time. We are the ones to be improved and raised to their standard, to become like them. They pity us, love us perhaps, for they love and hate as we cannot, but we must be controlled for our own good and the good of those who come after us. Discontent is for them the greatest of all vices, and we discontented ones are the ideal bad ones. We are present-moment livers. We express ourselves as best we may that Posterity will know us. Our faith is our God. But the men of belief refuse to express themselves. They follow, unaware that they follow. We serve ourselves and by so doing serve Posterity, but they serve the God of their belief and that God Posterity also must serve. Their God is behind all and ours is beyond all. They are driven by their God and we are attracted by ours. We and our kind will be masters and leaders until the end of time, and they are the best servants. We are the explorers and pioneers of the world, and they are the world. When we are away seeking the sites of new cities they will be building vast cities in our names. They are powerful and strong in their Belief. The lusciousness, and all the air-filling perfume-sweetness of the overhead ripe and bursting fruits, is nothing to them ; and those who

are tempted to eat are the weak ones, and the to-be-improved, and often, never-to-be-forgiven ones. But what matter in the End, if we be driven or called to that End! The End is one. We men of faith are vain men, and they men of belief are conceited men. Slaves or masters what at the End will it matter! The masters of to-day are only the greater servers of the slaves of to-morrow. Behind, beyond, above and below all, is the Will to Express. Which way we go, we are willed to go, and to all ways there can be but the one End."

IX.

"And the modern Eve,—as long as woman exists, to all the waking senses of men will be told the old story of the old Eden. Women cannot think like men, but they feel with the leaders of men, and feelings are but unshaped thoughts. One must suffer to know, and who feels knows. Women know, as the leaders of men know, of something, the highest pleasure of life, that lies beyond the Eden Contentment, and they applaud always the seekers of that beyond thing. They are inarticulate poets and philosophers and lovers of the Future God. In themselves they will paint their desires and colour the dreams of men and call forth, with all the beauty they can gather to their voices, the would-be contented sleeping men to the realization of their dreams. They will applaud the evildoers and the forerunners and urge men to become, for that applause, also evildoers and forerunners. They are the ultimate destroyers of all the too-easily-obeyed and self-satisfying and purposeless rule of imperfect and

blindness-bounded dialectic. They are the born sceptics and anti-socialists, and though they admire and wonder at Adam the father of all would-be-equal men, all socialists, it is always Satan, the father of all individualists and instinctive aristocrats, that alone they can truly love. They are, for all the immense enthusiasm of their first following, for would-be experimenters with new states are they always, and always fierce lovers of all new things, in the end anti-religionists and ultimate breakers away from all that is not the deepest and last truth. They are the born deceivers and part players and yet lovers of the unrevealed truth. Lovers also are they of all that is best and most purposeful and enduring and powering in things evil, and the bitter haters of such progress-retarding 'good' things, as complacency, monotony, and the exalted virtues of an all contentment forming belief. When discontent becomes the highest virtue, where shall stand these mothers of greatest men, these spirits of all revolt? Will they not be high above the Adam-like men who are now their masters? For all-seeing Posterity will know that the greatest men have always been the antitheses of all the Adams who have ever existed since the birth of the story, and that all great men are, and have been, and will ever be, fastidious, voluptuous, refined, over-sensitive, discontented, sceptical, and above all pleasure-loving, essentially womanish in all the qualities that have urged them on to the gathering of the results, that have become or shall be their names. Women, the restless, earth-turning, balance-destroying, motion-giving, healthful, lifeful, storm-bringers and stirrers of the deeps of the

ocean that is human life! Women,—perhaps the most far-seeing present-day men, and almost certainly the wise men of Posterity will see in them, for all their littleness and all their weakness and proneness to upward looking, the real leaders and lords of many past and coming centuries of mankind!”

CHAPTER XVI.

ON RELIGION AND SOCIALISM.

I.

MANY men believe that the fear of Death is the only reason why men live. But there must be life forms devoid of imagination that cannot conceive of death, and, therefore, cannot fear death. And the fear of death cannot be the reason of their living. And man, except in his possession of an ever-increasing faculty of imagination, does not differ from the lower life forms. His fear of death is only desire to live and an instinctive knowledge of the pleasure that might be won from life. Whilst there is life there is hope. The slave is beaten, and toils at his hated task to escape the pain of the whip. He suffers less pains to escape greater pains. And by death is the way of escape from all pains. But even the slave knows that in living, for all its pains, is much pleasure. His hope of gaining that pleasure is the cause of his fear of death. His master is for him a symbol, a proof of the freedom and pleasure that life holds, a confirmation of his hope-founded dreams. His master is a god, a cruel, pitiless, hated, but always envied god. And the slave serving his master to escape pain, in his hope, instinctively knows that he serves but for his own pleasure. He is for all the

bonds that hold him, and the lash that urges him to his task, an individualist and an ideal server, a free man. He serves not because of the pain inflicted by the master if he does not serve, but because of the hope in him of some day overcoming and knowing the pleasure of the overcoming all that pain.

II.

In the greatest depths of them, all men are egoists and individualists. The one motive is self-love. The beast roamed the forest in quest of pleasure, and so man with a like object roams over the world. The Will to Express is the only God, and pleasure is the result of expression. Each man lives but for the pleasure living will bring him, each man lives but for himself. And the native egoist is not tamed and controlled by artificial laws and religions and socialistic systems. He is tamed and controlled by his instinct for self-protection and self-exploitation. The time comes when the animal knows that its young will express it, and they must be protected and enriched and strengthened to all the extent of the parent animal's ability. Love of his children is the first conscience of egoistic man. Because of his love he enters into agreement with other men. He begins the social state. He makes laws and keeps them for the benefit of his children. He is controlled and tamed and in time loses his individuality in the state. And when he has outlived the love conscience, begins the vanity conscience. He is controlled and tamed by it. He is ever a lifeful, fierce animal, a would-be original man. He would lead the world of men. He

would sack the world for his own pleasure. But ever as he leads he obeys those whom he leads. He consciously seeks to power mankind and make mankind serve him, and he at the same time unconsciously serves mankind. He is the practical leader of his age and the instinctive follower of the desires of his age.

III.

And Religion is founded upon, and exists only, because of man's instinct to follow and serve. The religious good conscience is a purely man-made, artificial thing. It is not instinctive as the love conscience and the vanity conscience are, but is based upon these instincts and the instinct to pray. And its taming and controlling power over the egoist is only in its foundation. For the egoistic man is naturally unmoral and unreligious. As he desires he questions and is naturally a sceptic. Religion will not make us good, but if we see the good of conforming to the country's religion we will conform. If we love our children, we will love also those who protect and aid the advancement of our children. And we will conform to the best of our ability to the wishes of the people we love. We will serve them. They are marked off in our love conscience as that which is to be served. Our hope of pleasing them and our fear of displeasing them will help to tame us and control our way of life. And if we are vain, and few of us are not, the good opinions of all people become highly valued things. Our hope of pleasure will be hope of gaining their good opinions, our fear, fear of gaining their bad opinions. If some people,

having lost entirely their individuality, believe and conform to their belief-made good conscience, then to please them and benefit ourselves by pleasing them we will conform as best we may to their good conscience. We go to church; we give to charities; we do what we do not like doing. We, the most selfish, the most self-interested pleasure-seekers, become the best and most respectable citizens of life, because of our instinctive consciences, our love or our vanity.

IV.

Religion was the socialism of the Past, and socialism will be the religion of the Future. And socialism in all its forms is always an offspring of a prosperous age. In prosperous times the leader gives his orders from a bed of roses. He is wealthy and high in office, probably because of the exertion of his ancestors and not because of his own power. What he does all men in a like position could easily do. Prosperity and peace beget luxury and sybaritism amongst the leaders of the country. Leadership becomes a sinecure, and all men envy the leaders. But in times of stress, during the building up of the greatness of a country, then the strong men break from the ranks, the aristocrats are born. Then is all the immense responsibility of leadership. The leader is threatened by perils and dangers on all sides, and the hardest fighting must be done by him. Then though all will follow few envy him. He becomes a being apart from the people, a god, and only men like himself will envy him, born aristocrats who desire to be as he is, and never the socialists who would

have all men be as they are. In times of stress, when leadership is essential, the people look up to and admire and deify the leader; but in prosperous, luxurious times, when leaders are not required, the gods are brought to earth and the mass leads and wanders blindly on until ultimately again it loses itself, and the time is ripe again for the leaders to take their own places at the head of the mass.

V.

The Yea or Nay of a king is heard by all men. A poor, little, puny-spirited being by circumstance is crowned with gold and robed in purple, and the word of his weak little voice is trumpeted forth to the world's confines. It proclaims war or peace. It gives life or death. It governs humanity. And circumstances will crown a man king of his time as well as king of a nation. If a spark falls on green grass there is no result; but when the grass is dry and scered by summer winds, the spark may easily beget a vast conflagration. Circumstance, the comedian of the Fates, alters cases. If the world does not desire a king and a man comes crying, "I am your king," then the world, if it is not inconvenienced by the shouting, believes the man mad, and by not heeding him makes bootless all his cries. But if the day dawns when the world seeks a leader, and a man rises to cry, "Behold me, I am your king," the world is then ready to listen to what the man has to say. And the world when it does not desire to be convinced, when it does not see the benefit of being convinced, cannot by all the finest rhetoric and

grandest actions of a man be convinced. It is a vast, slumberous, slothful, not easily disturbed creature. But once roused by pain or desire, it is not particular as to the means of overcoming that desire. All it craves is sleep and contentment. When it is awakened and desired to be convinced, it is easily convinced, very easily deceived. Impassioned rhetoric then converts for it a system of reasoning into a dogmatic religion. When Rome had fallen on splendid days, when the fruit of her might was ripened to the bursting and falling, Christ rose to preach the equality of men, and because the time was ready, his words ran like a flaming, wind-driven fire through an over-ripened, summer-dried pasture. Christianity was the offspring of the sybarite days of Rome.

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VI.

At the present time the best and truest imitators of Christ are to be found in the ranks of the Freethinkers. They are men who have lost their individuality. Their love for their children has grown into a love for all mankind. They do not go to church, believe firmly they are not Christians. But they are naturally generous and sympathetic and non-individualistic to an extent that very few Bible-reading, church-going Christians are. In them is intense, profound pity, not as in the case with so many men, for their own children, but for all mankind. They are indignant with all that inflicts pain and torture upon mankind. The Christian mother will throw over the Church, and defy God, if she believes by so doing she will benefit or protect her

children. The ones she loves are to her all. Her love conscience is infinitely deeper and more powerful than her religious "good conscience." She will sin and face with strange joyful fear all the firmly believed-in punishment of her sin. She would, if she could, sacrifice body and soul, and would without scruple or pity thrust all men and women into Hell fire if she believed by so doing she was serving grandly those she loved. Her love is the deepest, most powerfully-influencing, all-controlling force she knows. It is God: it is the Will to Express. But her love is not the love of Christ. Love of one's children is not necessarily love of mankind. In real Christians the Will to Express has been smothered under belief, anæsthetized into insensibility. The true Christian is controlled by external forces. He is always unhappy because of the chains that he knows not are upon him. He is the only man on earth who is non-individualistic and does not place before all other things his own pleasure. He has lost himself. He knows not himself. He believes himself no more than any man, and his children no more than the children of any man. He is the only truly religious man. He is a philanthrope, a would-be Don Quixote. He loves all men and hates no man. He will share his own with the poor, and is ready to forgive and pity all weakness. He is as innocent as a child and as sincere as any god. His happiness is in seeing others happy, and he weeps over the pains of humanity. He is a gentle, sensitive, beautiful, lovable personality. Idealized only a little, he becomes as the angels wherewith the poets of Christianity people Heaven. He is what very, very few men are,

and what Christ probably was, a genuine, sincere socialist.

VII.

And as Christianity sprang from the preaching of Christ, so from the preaching of genuine socialists will spring the religion of the Future, practical socialism. And far more harsh, cruel, and unjust, and dogmatic will it be than the Christian Church at the height of its power ever was. Persecuted and bound rigorously within the bounds of its creed, the individualist will suffer as martyrs and heretics in the Past. He will long for and picture in his dreams the post-Christian, pre-socialistic, golden age in which we live. As the great painters of the Renaissance were limited in their subjects almost entirely to Holy families and sacred stories and legends, so will the artists of the Future be bound within the narrow limits prescribed by the socialistic doctrine. The scientists will be no more free than Galileo. In the poems of past poets and the works of past philosophers will be read meanings that are not there, in confirmation of the righteousness of the ways of the age and the justice of the laws of the age. As the Church and its followers were found in the Songs of Solomon, so in the works of the most aristocratic writers and singers will be found authority to bind down the aristocrat and reasons for giving him work to do. And when the command goes forth, "Thy thoughts thou shalt not utter!" what power then will there be to overcome the Powers that be? Individualists do not combine, or they would not be individualists. And the age of the individualist will

draw once again to a close. The age of the Slave will once again draw down upon the most prosperous and glorious age in all history. The Titans will rise again, and again will the gods be cast forth from their heights. Another long, weary period of history will be before them. Once again they will wander, poor, powerless, disguised, and yet free, valiant, cheerful will they always be, always beautiful beneath their rags, gods amongst the mortals.

CHAPTER XVII.

ON PRAYER.

I.

LET a man call himself what he will—Atheist, Agnostic, Fatalist, Jew, Christian, Brahmin—there is comfort for him in prayer. "It is unreasonable to pray," says the Fatalist, "I am to die at a certain moment on a certain day. I have my joys and pains apportioned to me. All this is written inexorably. It was written millions of years ago, and the ink of the writing never fades. If I do not die at the appointed time, then all the arrangement of the universe is hopelessly dislocated, all the fore-planning was at fault, and now the world will be turned irretrievably from its future course. Will I take the affairs of the universe in my own hands? Will I presumptuously ask the Supreme Being to close his ears to the voices of the Past and Future, to all animate and inanimate voices and listen only to mine? I am a rational being, and this prayer is no reasonable thing. I will respond, because I must, to hidden laws. I will suffer my pains and enjoy my pleasures. But this prayer,—why when fallen on dark days do I ask light of God? I who know that for the Future my evil days are as necessary as my happy ones. Why do I pray that this will be other-

wise and yet with my prayer unanswered go my way comforted? For comforted I am. I should not pray if it were not so. Do I know that what I ask shall be granted me? That all I hope for shall be realized? Does my prayer have a significance beyond its words? Does my instinct ask for that which is inconceivable to my intelligence? Am I so much wiser and far-seeing than I know myself to be? I often think I am. I have intelligence, the wisdom of the brain. I have instinct, the wisdom of the heart. I have all God's wisdom basing the wisdom of my intellect. I am a bubble on the sea of life, but my soul is of the composition of that sea."

• II.

"If forests affect the rainfall of a country, and men of authority say they do, then a communication is established between the trees and the clouds. Water for the trees is a necessity of existence. It is that which alone of all things can appease the real latent force of the trees, the desire to live. And by some means the trees bargain with the clouds and from them receive that which they so sincerely desire. The desire of the forest goes forth silently and invisibly. It is a wordless, directionless prayer. It is sent forth from no intelligence, towards no tangible thing. Yet the clouds are affected, feel the want, and dissolve and fall as the so-much-desired rain. The forest is consciously unaware of the existence of the clouds, yet to the clouds the wordless prayer is addressed, for what else could give it that which it desired? These inanimate trees are as wise in instinct

as we men are. They pray and we pray, and our prayers are answered but as theirs. Their instinctive wordless prayer is not to the clouds, but to the all or nothing which is the motive of all life-forms, God; and we men in our sincere heart prayers for aid address not man, nor the elements, nor circumstance, but a shapeless, indefinable God, knowing all the time by our conscious knowledge of experience that through man or the elements, or circumstance, alone can such aid come."

III.

"Our prayers are certainly worded, as we know the prayers of the trees are not; but are they not, the most sincere of them, meaningless to ourselves? 'God have mercy upon us,' 'God pity us,' 'God aid us,' we say, and what do we mean? Here are no real desires expressed in words, for what do our words mean? We pray for that which will enable us to gain that which we desire, but we do not know what we pray for, what will enable us to gain that which we desire. Is it that the prayers are behind the words, that prayer is the desire that rising and surging strong and great within us, cannot be expressed in words or actions, or any of the art forms that make up this our life? Our prayers are desires for what we cannot define, to whom addressed we do not know. Consciously we pray to the all and everything summed up in the word of convenience, God; subconsciously we pray to that which can give us what we desire. The forest trees do not consciously know that they desire water, nor that the clouds hold the water they desire, and there

are things that we desire before we know what they are, and there are forms that hold what we desire and we are consciously unaware that such forms exist. And when we offer up our meaningless prayers, and sincere prayers only are they that pain brings forth from us, we communicate with the unseen things that hold the, to us, unknown forms of our desires."

IV.

"I see a cloud floating in the sky and something about the cloud attracts my attention. Thus the cloud communicates with me. It leaves a message to be read and acted upon by my subconscious self, and then passes on, forgotten for ever in my conscious mind. But the very fact of my roused interest, of the upwards motion of my eyes, of the pause in my walk, the wordless contemplation that for the moment negates other thoughts,—see what a vast part this little message plays in my affairs. It has altered the whole future course of my life. Whilst I paused, the motions around me never ceased, and who stands still for an instant in this world of motion, gains or loses, he knows not what! A friend calls and speaks to me and affects my future movement. I would go one way and he expresses his experiences before me and tells me of the advantages of another way, and that way I go. This conversation alters my life. I meet new friends and observe new incidents. The path I intended to go is closed now for ever. But did my friend's words alter my way more than my wordless communication with the cloud? The soul that accounts for the clouds being in existence, that

gives it formless shape and directionless motion, communicates with the same soul-form within myself. I commune with my friend consciously in words, subconsciously in feelings suggested by the words, in language that is really wordless, but of meaning inconceivable in the thought of words. I might drink a cup of water and delay or accelerate its evaporation, and might thus affect the cloud and its shape at some particular instant, and by affecting its weight alter its course and speed through the heavens, as much as the cloud has affected my way through life. Instants of time and immeasurable, ultra-microscopic forces are of endless influence where there is no conceivable end or beginning. And the cloud was unaware of the part it played in my life, and I of the part I played in the cloud's existence. We have communicated and we know it not. And so the trees communicate with the clouds. The clouds are the medium through which the prayers of the forest are answered, and neither forest nor clouds know of the existence of the other. So too I commune with flowers and beasts and birds and trees and the arts of man. They give answers to my desires and I to theirs. There is an understanding below intelligence that is rarely dreamed of by intelligence."

V.

"And this understanding, this under-inter-communication of things,—is it not in a knowledge, a subconscious knowledge, born of this under-inter-communication and understanding, that we see the end and the reason of the end, and advance so

confidently and hopefully towards that end? All things, instinctively wise, know that the end of one is the end of all. All tend towards the one goal of which the conscious individual ideal is but a rudely, delusion-coloured foreshadow. In the wisdom of the instinct, the real deep heart wisdom, the grand world ideal is sought, and each and everything endowed with this wisdom knows that individual advance without collective advance is impossible and absurd. Each must aid each to its fullest capacity, and only by giving such aid will it advance itself. So below its consciousness each thing, aware of its end and the means to its end, strives ever for the supreme understanding between all things. Thus is the subconscious ideal shaped—the understanding between all things. And each thing in quest of that ideal writes its experience history as grandly as it may for all to read. All actions that make up life have this one object—to express the inmost being that is the resultant of all impressed experience, to express impressions. If you can read my experience history you have added my life experience to your own, you are so much wiser, so much more powerful. And if you are so much more powerful, the more aid have you to give me. To enrich the world I know in my heart wisdom is the only way of enriching myself. So I turn to my living, which is the art of life, and I expose to your gaze, can you see it, my naked soul. To make myself manifest is the reason I live. If I earn your approbation it is good, for I know your deeper sense understands my deeper self; you read below my words; you appreciate my gift to you; you have gained, you acknowledge by your applause, new

knowledge, new forwarding power from me; you are under obligation to me; you must aid me to forward myself. I cast my bread upon the waters that it shall be returned to me: I give to you that I shall gain by my gift."

VI.

"Life in all forms is art and art is language. Its object is the manifestation of the soul and the merging of all individual ideals into the one ideal of the universe. The end of all desires is this soul or self-manifestation; and the manifestation can only be expressed in the overcoming of external resistances, which is the same as the reading of the influence of these external resistances, expressing their impressions, and taking to ourselves of the power which is the understanding written in the influence or power that these external things exercise over ourselves. By overcoming resistances we become masters of the resistances, and from these new slave resistances receive the new power of their serfdom, which is the aid to advance that we have sought. We have read their soul histories in their art work, their symbolification. We are the richer by all these meaning-weighted symbols. Now with this new aid we can the better express ourselves. So we would ever write the answers to desires in actions, and this we do when we can build ideal conscious answers to these desires. All things express themselves, and when expressed things are understood the understanding thing absorbs the expressing thing. And we all offer ourselves as slaves and instruments to those who can understand us, because we know that

they will employ our powers for the forwarding of their end, which is also our end, better than we can do. Do you covet something of your neighbour's, then that something is for the time the ideal that directs your actions. You are consciously expressing a conscious desire in seeking that thing, but unconsciously you are expressing the great master desire that is not conscious. You are connecting the Past and the Future, neither of which is visible to you. Consciously you play a small part in the world's affairs, but unconsciously you play a part that begins and ends in eternity and of which the meaning, the, to us, inconceivable meaning, is God. So we pray in actions for definite conscious ends, which to our instincts are only new beginnings and new ends. And the prayer of the instinct is the sincere prayer to the final grand ideal which we name God; and the answer to such a prayer is wordlessly written in the comfort derived from prayer. As we call God, God, so we call this comfort Hope, and Hope is heart wisdom. Were we as wise in our brains as we are in our hearts, as far-seeing in Reason as we are in Instinct, then would all prayers be answered in voluntary actions, and each man of us would be his ideal man, his God. Men are always whilst living, praying, and all their prayers are sincere. By giving, we answer prayers addressed to us; by taking, we answer our own prayers. The first word ever uttered, the first deed ever done with a conscious aim, these were the first conscious prayers. Language and action and all forms of art are prayers. Prayer is only expression of desire, and in desire the universe was born!"

VII.

“ When we pray we pray for nobody but ourselves. Our own advance is the one thing that concerns us. If we aid others, it is always to aid ourselves. In some manner we must find answer to the inmost desires, and these desires are always, whatsoever form they may take, to be answered in self-expression. We pray but for one thing, and that is life, for living is self-expressing. Whilst we maintain life we possess power to influence external things, and this influencing of external things is the writing of the experience history of ourselves. We employ native force always in such expression. We turn men or other nature forms to aid us, directly by superior physical force, or by entreaty, which is first the force of subtlety and cunning, and then the mental force. Always we seek for a conscious answer to our prayer in the results of voluntary actions. If contrary forces overpower us and render us powerless to act, we pray for the removal of these things; pray through our ideal God indirectly to the opposing forces themselves; we seek to show them that we have what they desire, live to give them what they desire; we seek to become beautiful in their eyes. Then our prayers are heart prayers, and our reasons for seeking to beautify ourselves are the reasons of the flowers in the garden, and we pray as the trees pray to the clouds. We live by the brain until the brain vision is gloomed by the darkness, and then we live by the light of the heart. By day we set our course by the mountain peaks, but at night we must trust more to the farther away stars. When we see an answer to desire in

action then we act, but when we see no way of fulfilling our desires in action, we pray to our God. That is, we trust in heart-wisdom and the under-soul communication to attain that which we require; and brain-wisdom is as a bubble that floats on a sea of heart-wisdom, so profound is heart-wisdom."

VIII.

"When we ask God to have mercy upon us, the words mean little,—but the sincere, the uncontrollable desire, the emphasis of this wording, the prayer itself means,—who can set a limit to what the prayer means? We would not have God remove external pressures that are painful to us, but would have him give us greater strength, and that is understanding of the pressures, to remove, or rather, absorb these pressures ourselves, to overcome them and make their strength additions to our strength. The tree's desire is not to have the pain of thirst removed, but to gain through its God the added strength of the expression of some external thing that will enable it to overcome the pain of thirst. It does not desire to die. To overcome pain is to create a pleasure, and pleasures are the only wages we live for in this conscious life. For pleasure is the form approbation takes when we know we have in some way expressed ourselves so that others will be enabled to read our expression. The great final longing tends never towards Death, but always towards action and life. Nothing sincerely desires to die save that in the dying might a fine art form of self-manifestation be attained. We desire to move, to carve our way to the fullest

and grandest extent. The native, warrior-instinct of our ancestors is full and quick in each of us, and it needs but the small touch of fine art music, which is the expression of a soul finely expressed, to make us aware that it is there. What means this 'have mercy upon us,' but to have no mercy on all that which, for the time, overpowers and rules us. Make that not less powerful, but us more powerful. When we would defeat a runner do we desire that he will run less swiftly than now he runs, or that we should run more swiftly than ever he can run? This is the meaning of our prayer and of all prayers, whether we seek the answer in action or in the comfort of God-addressed prayers. Praying is powering. When physical strength fails we employ cunning, which is mental force. If we show powers superior to ourselves the wisdom of not exerting their power upon us, then we employ their refraining from such use as our own strength, and are of superior power to them, for we lead them, not they us. Present life is a probation for the rule of the intellect. Men talk of new senses, but what are senses but flowers of the great root sense, the heart, and are we not ever evolving a new root sense, the brain? When all we know instinctively, we know in intelligence; when subconsciousness becomes consciousness,—what a world then this shall be!"

IX.

"The more perfect a thing is the more unlike its parts are, and the more unstable are these parts and the more susceptible to impression is the whole.

Perfection is beauty, and beauty is the expression in the life art form of the sum of the life's experience. So all things strive for beauty, instinctively knowing that the more beautiful they are in external expression, the more power they hold to impress, the more susceptible are external things to their influence, and the wiser by the aid of these external things do they become. For prayer must be answered by external influence, by expression overcoming impression. We must add the beauty experience history, expressed beauty, to our own understanding to beautify ourselves. We must make the experience of others our own experience. Desire we can only appease by beautifying ourselves. The desire of the flower is to be as beautiful as possible, and the desire of the man is the same, and the man sees one means to his end by adding the flower's beauty to his own experience. In the flower's art he will read the flower's life story and be the richer in this knowledge, and knowledge instinctive or intelligent is the one motive power of increasing self-beautification. So the man studies the flower and aids it the better to express itself. He waters it, prunes it, and fosters it, with care and great attention. And he never dreams whilst so he acts, that whilst he seeks the aid of the flower to attain his end, his life ideal, so he aids the flower on the way to its end also. And the most beautiful flower is the most attractive to man, and exercises more power over him and gains more of his influence. So God helps those who help themselves. The more beautiful we are, the more of what we desire we gain from external things, and the more we gain, the more aid is given to us by those external things in our art

of self-expression. The richer we are, the higher our position, the more people will gather about us and listen to us and watch our deeds, and the more we can give, and giving is willing and gaining obligation from those to whom we give. The more we strive for beauty, the greater conscious answer we seek for our prayer, and the more perfect we are the more that prayer is answered."

X.

"The desire of the atom or of that which is infinitely smaller than the atom, and of the sun and of that again which is infinitely vaster than the sun,—the desire of the flower, of the fish, of the bird, of the man, is a prayer, and the ultimate aim of every prayer is in all cases exactly the same. The whole universe is the substantiation of a desire, and the whole universe moves but to express more clearly that desire. It is but the mightiest prayer, the prayer written in symbols of the small part prayers of all its parts. And the small prayer of the forest trees is answered as we see, and what could resist the prayer of the universe? Every prayer contains its own answer, whether that answer be written in action or formless hope. The prayer of the universe is a one perfection. It is the final and supreme ideal of all men, and of all things. It is the only conception possible of God."

XI.

- "The whole earth and everything upon it constitutes a written prayer. Protected by such a

prayer, what power could destroy our earth? But the worm prays as the man prays and is trampled underfoot and destroyed. We devour birds and animals whose ends are our own ends. And might not this world crumble and dissolve in the maw of a mightier starving world? It can well be so. We are protected by gigantic powers, but we can dream of powers to which such are trivial and frail. You say, "But progress!" You point to civilization, to evolution, to cities and temples and bridges and ships, and say, "Can all these come to naught, all this history of mankind?" The flower's art life is as great to it as our art lives are to us, and yet it is plucked from the plant and fades and comes to naught. Yet in so doing it answers the law of necessity. Did it not from the first budding read and understand the wordless writing of Hope? With instinct wise and far-seeing it came the way of the inexorable end. Its march of life was Fatewards whither Death awaited it, and it knew and still came to this naught as I go now and the world that is about me. And yet if the flower's end and the world's end and my end are one, why cannot we understand this and each aid each? In our heart wisdom we do—in brain wisdom we are not yet sufficiently wise. In heart wisdom we seek the world's ideal; in brain wisdom we seek the smaller, nearer ideal for which we consciously live. In heart wisdom we practise the grandest humility. We suffer pains to gain pleasure, and our pleasure ultimately means the benefiting and aiding of men. We pause not before any obstacles whilst we strive to show our naked souls and enrich the world of men.

by all that we know. We place our best in the art form for the benefit of others and the ultimate benefit of ourselves or our ideal. In heart wisdom, we follow the world's ideal; in brain wisdom we seek our own and go the individual way."

XII.

"Some men suffer the greatest pain of all, Death, gladly enough to realize, as they believe, their ideal. If we could see how when we die, we die for our ideal, how gladly and fearlessly could we all die—and to fulfil the ultimate ideal of which our small individual ideals are but small parts, we all die. For the individual ideal is but a luminous part of a dark whole, and the whole is the ideal of the universe. This is the end we seek instinctively, this universal ideal, the end that is lighted by the heart light. We want to play our part in the grand affair and play it as grandly as we may. We consciously place a small brick, with all the care of a lifetime, in a little side turret, or in a small column, or in some other part of the inconceivably vast structure of the universe ideal, and dream we are the architects and would be lonely rearers of the structure. When we know in brain wisdom that we only play the small part, that we do not rear the whole structure, but would have the whole structure perfect and complete, then shall we see that to aid our fellow-workmen and the men who follow in our steps is the first way to advance our end. And if we can see that dying is the greatest aid we can give, shall we not gladly die? Some day the individual ideal shall become the world's ideal.

Some day we will be enabled to cast a light on the reason of our dying, and in the dying will know a pleasure never dreamed of by man before. For the greatest pleasure is that which negates the greatest pain, and when we die having robbed the fear of Death of its sting what pleasure will come to us with the coming end! Who at this time can dream of such a pleasure? Only those have known it who in the past have grandly died,—in battle, in the martyr's fire; the men who have died for glory and the men who have died for belief. And one day rich in knowledge all men shall know. And then the fear of Death shall be overcome and fade away as night darkness when the sun comes."

XIII.

"And whence will come the ideal brain wisdom, the understanding that is to be as wide and mighty as the understanding of the heart? The supreme humility-fostered self-hood, so strangely to us unmoral and sincere? It comes from Nature and experience of which all Nature is but a written history, and not, as so many people believe, from books and the preaching of wise or so-called inspired men. Nothing can we learn from other men's works but what we know. All we understand in a book is our own experience shaped in the book and recognized by ourselves. Nothing can we learn from anything but to know ourselves. All Nature is a reflection of ourselves. And this is our eternal quest; in seeking God we seek and find ourselves. On the works of other men we must build, and our building

will be new understanding and the ever-strengthening glimmer that one day will be the light to charm away for ever the fears and pains of death. Inward culture is the world's one saviour, and is a sure and certain thing. We pray to live, and the end of life is the beautification of the world into a Heaven beyond our present-day dreams. And we pray for what we shall receive. When the last generation has added the final touch to all,—what a world then this shall be! And centuries hence, even, when men will die gladly, and all understanding, none will weep, none sympathize, but all recognize and utilize the benefit of the dying! When every man will be a supreme egoist and yet the friend of all men! When will be understanding between all things! And such a day can be forecasted from the tendencies of all things. It is the answer to our prayers: it is the world's one desire."

XIV.

"Biologists tell how all life forms begin in a protoplasm or nucleated cell, and the cells tend to reproduce sensitive cells, and these cells differ according to their environment. The most perfect plant is the most complex—that is to say that it has the greatest variety of cells. We mortals are like the individual cells of a vast Tree of Life. We are all various, and each has his special part to play. And that part is the end as far as each man is concerned. What do we care for the men beside us or before or behind save that they serve us and aid us towards our end? We must each perfect our part, if needs be, at their expense. We cannot see

that our real end is the perfection of the plant and that each man by us has a part to play as necessary to the ultimate perfection as our own, and how useless our own is without our brother's part. It is only through them that the effect of our work appears on the external surface of the plant. We must understand. We must realize not the green darkness all around me, but the perfect flower above, and the image of that flower must become our ideal in life. They prune the plant to give it additional strength. They remove the leaves to make the bloom stronger and more beautiful. And the individual cells in the leaves detached are cut off from the life source and die and are naught. But the life source,—that does not die. It turns in another direction with renewed vigour and a new idea. And likewise the soul of man never dies, but lives eternally. The result of all he has done in life flows upwards towards his ideal. His contact with external things has translated the meaning of those things into wisdom and life energy, and this flows into the oversoul and never is dissipated by acts. You see a man working, and you think now his energy dissipates as he works, but he is actually taking life energy from the work; he is constructing a material shape of his soul. As the cells extract carbon from the air, so he takes a soul necessity from the environment in which he dwells and passes it through him into the supreme oversoul. If I die to-morrow then all the experience of my life must still exist in the oversoul, not to bloom again as the form of myself, but to spread and flow into a thousand forms, adding a beauty to each, never losing one unit

of life energy though so dissipated as to be utterly inconceivable to the human intellect. Thus my memory, my experience, my reading of Nature, my soul can never die but must be conserved and live eternally in all things. I live to hear the answer to all my life's uttered and unuttered prayers, and the comfort I gain from prayer is the instinctive knowledge I have, that all my prayers will be answered!"

THE END.

